

IMAGINING A CITY: VISIONS OF AVANT-GARDE ARCHITECTS AND  
ARTISTS FROM 1953 TO 1970 JAPAN

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# IMAGINING A CITY: VISIONS OF AVANT-GARDE ARCHITECTS AND ARTISTS FROM 1953 TO 1970 JAPAN

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This dissertation traces the emergence of the artistic imagination that envisioned an archetype of the city, as visualized in four specific projects created by architects and artists in collaboration between 1953 and 1970 in Japan. Specifically, the selected projects, ranging from a photography book to a manifesto publication, an art and architecture installation, and a temporary expo pavilion, involved photography in varying forms and degrees. This dissertation takes the position that each collaborative project was created to investigate “modernity” specific to postwar Japan, through the efforts of more than a dozen architects and artists, many of whom were born in the 1930s, often referred to as the *yakeato-ha* generation.

The four projects are analyzed in separate chapters, in the following order: (1) the photographic publication *Katsura Nihon ni okeru dentō to sōzō* (Katsura: Tradition and Creation in Japanese Architecture) (1960) by photographer Ishimoto Yasuhiro and architect Tange Kenzō; (2) the manifesto of the architectural and design collective Metabolism, titled *Metabolism/1960 Toshi e no teian* (Metabolism/1960: Proposal for a New Urbanism) (1960); (3) the multimedia installation *Erekutorikku rabirinsu* (Electric Labyrinth) created for the occasion of the 1968 Milan Design Triennial by architect Isozaki Arata in collaboration with photographer Tōmatsu Shōmei, graphic designer Sugiura Kōhei, composer Ichiyanagi Toshi, and sound engineer Okumura Yukio; (4) the Symbol Zone of the 1970 Japan Expo that consisted of the *Omatsuri hiroba* (Festival Plaza), the *Taiyō no tō* (Tower of the Sun) and the space frame,

produced by Isozaki Arata, Okamoto Tarō, and Kamiya Kōji and Tange Kenzō, respectively and jointly.

Through the above case studies, the dissertation will examine to various degrees the following three areas against the backdrop of Japan's politics between 1953 and 1970: (1) the visions, images and projects created in collaboration; (2) the forms of collectivism and collaboration that facilitated the creation; and (3) the roles of printed and circulated visual materials, in particular photography and prints, often culled from publicly available sources such as newspapers, journals and books.



## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Yasufumi Nakamori received a B.A. in Political Science from Waseda University, Tokyo, Japan in 1988. He received a J.D. from the University of Wisconsin Law School in 1995. After practicing law in New York City and Tokyo for seven years, he embarked on a study of the modern and contemporary history of art, and completed an M.A. in art history at Hunter College of The City University of New York in 2005. Nakamori received a Ph.D. in art history from Cornell in 2011. He has been working since April 2008 as Assistant Curator of Photography at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston. His first book *Katsura: Picturing Modernism in Japanese Architecture, Photographs by Ishimoto Yasuhiro* (the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston in association with Yale University Press, 2010) received the 2011 Alfred H. Barr Jr. Award for Smaller Museums, Collections, Libraries and Exhibitions from the College Art Association. In the fall semester of 2011, Nakamori is scheduled to teach a course on post-1945 Japanese art and architecture at Rice University.

This dissertation is dedicated to my parents, Nakamori Kazue and the late Ikuyo.

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Over the course of my six years at Cornell, I delivered papers focusing on various aspects of the dissertation, in a variety of settings such as colloquiums, symposiums, lecture series, and workshops. These included Cornell University's Under Construction series (on architectural history) and Visual Culture Colloquium series (on art history), the Art History Graduate Symposium (organized by Cornell art history graduate students), the History of Art Graduate Symposium (organized by the Frick Collection and the Institute of Fine Arts, New York University), the University of Houston College of Architecture Symposium ("Concrete Utopias: 1960s Architecture and Urbanism"), the Rice University Chao Center for Asian Studies Brown Bag Lecture Series, and the Tange Kenzō Workshop at Harvard University's Graduate School of Design. Comments from co-presenters and participants from these venues have been most helpful in refining my arguments.

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## PREFACE

### A NOTE ON LANGUAGE

Japanese names are given with family name first, followed by given names. In translating Japanese text, phrases of particular significance have been left in italicized romaji after the English word. The titles of all primary documents have been translated into romaji.

## INTRODUCTION

Since the 1960s, when I first began my cogitations as an architect, I have frequently called to mind the scenery of ruins. By ruminating on the images of Japanese cities bombarded in 1945, I believed I might be able to construct a point of view with which to confront world history. It was only from the springboard stance of a return to that point where all human constructs were nullified that future construction would again be possible, I thought. Ruins to me were a source of imagination, and in the 1960s, it turned out that the image of the future city was itself [a] ruins. Professing faith in ruins was equal to planning the future, so much were the times deranged and out of sync.<sup>1</sup>

[emphasis added]

-- Isozaki Arata

This dissertation traces the emergence of the artistic imagination that envisioned an archetype of the city, as visualized in specific projects and publications created by architects and artists in collaboration between 1953 and 1970 in Japan. Specifically, the projects under consideration involved photography in varying forms and degrees. The selected projects range from a photography book to a manifesto publication, an art and architecture installation, and a temporary expo pavilion. The projects were created to investigate “modernity” specific to postwar Japan, through the efforts of more than a dozen architects and artists, many of whom were born in the 1930s. Often referred to as the *yakeato-ha* generation, as adolescents, they experienced Japan’s wartime fascist politics, searching for their own version of “modernity” (as

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<sup>1</sup> Arata Isozaki, *Japan-ness in Architecture*, trans. Sabu Kohso (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2006), 99-100.

generally embodied in the 1942 roundtable discussion known as “*kindai no chōkoku*,” or “overcoming modernity”), soon saw their respective cities in ashes, and in postwar Japan grew up watching those cities being rebuilt and metamorphosed. The epigraph above, in the words of architect Isozaki Arata (b. 1931), represents a sentiment shared by many of them, who, from their memories, conceived the archetype of a city, a future city, in the immediate post-WWII years. These men and women soon became anxious over the organic, chaotic and resilient reversion of the city to its former condition prior to the war. Isozaki’s statement thus speaks of the power of viscerally and visually experiencing the city in ruination, as a result of his and his cohort’s realization of the destruction of both the physical and intangible features of the city. Standing in ruins, they were also inspired to imagine a future city. To many of them, the image of the bombarded city, memorialized through photography, served as an allegory for the death of the old city and its ideological system (i.e., Japan’s imperial fascism during the war years) as well as for the city’s new life.

Sensing this duality, a group of architects and artists interpreted the image of the city in ruination as a rupture from the past, while at the same time an image of the future city.<sup>2</sup> This group, as the object of investigation in the dissertation, “Imagining a City: Visions of Avant-Garde Architects and Artists from 1953 to 1970 Japan,” presented their blueprints of the new city, or an ur-form of the city, in various non-built formats, in Japan’s postwar environments. In their projects, they searched for an interdisciplinary ground to articulate their nuanced desire to create a space specific to and beyond their place and time (i.e., the 1950s and 1960s). Because the projects discussed here (except for one) were unbuilt, the architects and artists were able to

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<sup>2</sup> As embodied in Isozaki’s statement, the sequence of time, or the relationship between the future and the past, collapsed into one, as seen in a collage that combines a photograph of a Greek ruined temple and a drawing by Isozaki, titled “*Fuka katei*”(Incubation period)(1962).

freely experiment with a wide range of ideas and agendas. Embracing such issues as space-time, and tradition and modernity, they cropped, juxtaposed, and translated visual materials, particularly photography, found in journals and other printed media that were amply available commercially, as well as the photographs they themselves or someone else (e.g., a trained photographer) took. In their pursuits, they consciously reinterpreted, and constructed in some cases, the notion of tradition suited in postwar Japan (as seen in the cultural discourse, “*dentō ronsō*,” (debate over tradition) that emerged in the mid-1950s) and attempted to find there an impetus for their postwar creation. Importantly, the space they envisioned was not a utopia but a temporal “heteropia,” in the Foucaultian sense.<sup>3</sup> It would be a complex space of multiple temporalities, constructed from the protagonists’ memories of their wartime experiences as well as their postwar imagination intermediated through photography. But it would be a vulnerable space that expressed their keen awareness of the potential for future destructions of such a space, for example, by another nuclear attack.

Overall, the dissertation will examine to various degrees the following three areas against the politics of 1950s and 1960s Japan: (1) the visions, images and projects of selected avant-garde architects, created in collaboration with photographers and artists, which project their act of imagining a city; (2) the forms of collectivism and collaboration that facilitated the creation; and (3) the roles of printed and circulated visual materials, in particular photography and prints, often culled from publicly available sources, such as newspapers, journals and books. In particular, the dissertation aims to observe and weigh closely the individual interpretations, by certain architects and artists, of selected photographs, that is to say, of exploiting the medium’s unique capabilities of distorting a time sequence—or, to borrow the words

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<sup>3</sup> Michel Foucault, “Of Other Spaces,” trans. Jay Miskowiec, *Diacritics* 16 (1986), 22-27.

of Roland Barthes, of connecting both the past (“this has been”) and the future (“this will be”) to the present, a current moment of viewing a photograph<sup>4</sup>—as well as to the medium’s capacity to provide access to what Walter Benjamin terms the optical unconscious, the things of which we are unconscious and thus would not see otherwise.

### **Four Specific Projects and Publications**

The four specific projects mentioned above, by the selected Japanese architects and artists, were produced and circulated between 1953 and 1970. The projects are separate but interconnected in the sense that all of them are related to the architect Tange Kenzō (1911 – 2005), his protégé Isozaki Arata, or both. They also deal with the tension between modernity and tradition, and the intervention and interpretation of that tension through visual materials.

The four projects will be analyzed in separate chapters, in the following order: (1) the photographic publication, titled *Katsura Nihon ni okeru dentō to sōzō* (Katsura: tradition and creation in Japanese architecture) (1960), by photographer Ishimoto Yasuhiro and architect Tange Kenzō; (2) the manifesto of the architect and designer collective Metabolism, titled *Metabolism/1960 Toshi e no teian* (Metabolism/1960: Proposal for a new urbanism) (1960); (3) the multimedia installation, *Erekutorikku rabirinsu* (Electric labyrinth), created for the occasion of the 1968 Milan Design Triennial by architect Isozaki Arata in collaboration with photographer Tōmatsu Shōmei, graphic designer Sugiura Kōhei, composer Ichiyonagi Toshi, and sound engineer Okumura Yukio; (4) the Symbol Zone of the 1970 Japan Expo that consisted of the *Omatsuri hiroba* (Festival plaza), the *Taiyō no tō* (Tower of the sun) and the

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<sup>4</sup> Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography*, trans. Richard Howard (New York: Hill and Wang, 1981), 96.

space frame, produced by Isozaki Arata, Okamoto Tarō, and Kamiya Kōji and Tange Kenzō, respectively and jointly.

Juxtaposing these projects, in the dissertation, I will investigate the junctures and convergences of postwar Japanese art architecture in a society that experienced numerous drastic shifts. As spectators, observers, and participants, the architects and artists in this study created an image-based discourse, in a collaborative format, borrowing from a pool of widely disseminated photographic images, to express their desires and anxieties about cities in postwar Japan. One of my goals in this study is to trace a complex and nuanced system and operation of the alternative architectural practices of Tange, Isozaki, and the architects from Metabolism, supported by their non-architect colleagues. In the increasingly capitalist society, Tange, already well-established, and Isozaki and the Metabolists, emerging in the architectural profession, were confronted in the 1950s and 1960s with the collision between the then-prevailing capitalistic Modernist disciplines and their own desire to foresee the future and reinterpret Japan's past (which carried the shadow of imperialism and fascism), and to cultivate in their postwar practice a sensitive and intentional translation of the past. For example, continuity in the prewar fascism was seen in the emergence of the above mentioned "*dentō ronsō*" (debate over tradition), which can be traced to the 1942 roundtable discussion, "*kindai no chōkoku*" (overcoming modernity). In this process, they each gradually found their individual and generational subjectivity and identity in accordance with their time and place in the postwar years.

1953 forms the beginning of the investigation period of the dissertation. It was when the discourse "*dentō ronsō*" was emerging, after the Korean War began in 1950, and the US occupation period had ended in 1952, following the San Francisco Peace Treaty signed a year earlier. It was the year when the photographer Ishimoto Yasuhiro

(b. 1921), one of the protagonists in the dissertation, returned to Japan after fourteen years in the US, including four years for his photographic training at the Institute of Design in Chicago. 1970 forms the closing year of this investigation. It was the year when Japan—at one of its heights of economic development and political discord in the postwar years—hosted not only its first world exposition, but the first one in Asia. Titled “Japan World Exposition 1970,” that event became the venue for a number of significant architectural, artistic and technological collaborations and innovations that involved most of the protagonists discussed in the dissertation. As importantly, the 1960 U.S.-Japan Security Treaty (generally known as Anpo, short for Nichibei Anzen Hoshō Jōyaku, or the Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security between the United States and Japan) was renewed in 1970 despite its numerous problems for Japan, including the continued occupation of Okinawa by the U.S.-led Allied Forces. During the period of the dissertation, the country experienced numerous protest demonstrations by students and workers over Anpo, reflecting a nascent recognition by citizens of their full rights and responsibilities in a society undergoing tremendous flux.<sup>5</sup> By 1970, the values and principles governing Modernist art and architecture had been dismantled, and the ideas and practices of postmodernism had emerged in each of the fields. For example, by the mid-1960s, Tange’s emphasis in design had shifted, from functionalism and traditionalism, to structuralism and later postmodernism. Earlier, by 1960, Neo Dadaism Organizers (also simply known as Neo-Dada), a short-lived but radically “anti-art” avant-garde artist collective, emerged through periodic group exhibitions, *Yomiuri andepandan ten* (Yomiuri independent

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<sup>5</sup> A few excellent scholarly essays on the subject have been published in recent years. For example, William Marotti discusses the significance of the year 1968 in Japanese politics and the student protest movement. See William Marotti, “Japan 1968: The Performance of Violence and the Theater of Protest,” *American Historical Review* 114, no. 1 (February 2009): 97-135.

exhibition), that were established in 1958, where any artist could exhibit by paying an entry fee. At the exhibitions, the artists of the collective created a wide range of ephemeral art works, engaged in performance, that fundamentally questioned and revolted against the formal qualities of art practiced up to that point in Japan.

During rapid economic growth of the fifties and sixties, Japanese society speedily accumulated capital, and, accordingly, it was filled with material goods and visual fetishes. Likewise, the nation's media culture solidified, in terms of both printed and moving visual media, with the active production of commercial films and television programs. Television broadcasting began in Japan in 1953, but because of the enormous cost of television receivers, televisions were at first displayed in public spaces (e.g., department stores and railroad stations) and became popular among individual consumers only from the late fifties. Due to the erection of Tokyo Tower as a television tower in 1958, the number of television programs increased and black-and-white television sets became popular among consumers; color sets were heavily marketed beginning in the early sixties.<sup>6</sup> Several important events were widely televised, including the Crown Prince Akihito's marriage to Michiko Shōda in 1959, and later the 1964 Tokyo Olympics. Around then, the utterly shocking scene of the assassination of Asanuma Inejirō (1898-1960), the head of Japan's Socialist Party, was televised live nationwide, thus viscerally reminding the general public of the media's visual effectiveness.<sup>7</sup> Needless to say, all of these events were thoroughly photographed and distributed in various publications, particularly weekly magazines filled with photography. This established the so-called "*gurafu bunka*" (photographic magazine culture), which refers to the visual culture driven by photographic

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<sup>6</sup> Wikipedia contributors, "Gaitō terebi," *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*, <<http://ja.wikipedia.org/wiki/街頭テレビ>> (accessed September 6, 2010).

<sup>7</sup> Asanuma was assassinated by seventeen-year-old Yamaguchi Otoyō (1943-1970) at a televised rally for the upcoming Lower-house election.



periodicals. And because of the rapid and wide development and dissemination of technology and visual media, such as cameras and televisions, these events and incidents were thoroughly documented and disseminated throughout and outside of Japan. In this process of the nation's recovery from the devastation of war and occupation, and in further metamorphosing from a condition of depletion to one of plentitude, Japanese society at large, filled up with commodities, became a phantasmagoria of capitalist culture in Walter Benjamin's sense of the term. Such a characterization was most visibly observed in the 1970 World Expo. Undeniably, it was the magic of photography (and film) that accelerated the visualization of such characterization.

With respect to periodicals, beginning in the mid-1950s through the 1960s, there was a weekly magazine boom. Newspapers and other publishing companies issued numerous weekly magazines, such as *Shūkan asahi*, *Sunday mainichi*, and *Shūkan bunshun*, and the weekly comic magazine, *Shūkan shōnen magajin*. Commonly these weekly magazines targeted either middle-class businessmen or teenagers, and were filled with photographs and illustrations, constituting a part of the *guraifu bunka*. *Shūkan shōnen magajin*, a *manga* specialist widely read by children, was the most popular weekly magazine. For example, *Shūkan asahi* reached sales of one million copies in September 1954, demonstrating its popularity and potential as a venue for the exchange of information and opinions.<sup>8</sup>

To a lesser extent, periodicals of photography, art, and architecture also experienced a high mark in circulation during the period. These journals and magazines, all saturated with images, experienced soaring circulation figures. For example, the photography journal *Asahi Graph* marked its highest domestic sales, at

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<sup>8</sup> Yoshida Noriaki, "Shuppan media no rekishi" (The history of publishing media) in *Shuppan media nyūmon* (Introduction to publishing media), ed. Kawai Ryōsuke (Tokyo: Nihon Hyōronsha, 2006), 37-38.

greater than 700,000, up to that time in the postwar years, when it devoted twenty-three pages to black and white photographs of the atomic bomb victims in Hiroshima and Nagasaki in its 6 August 1952 issue, upon the lifting of the ban on the publication of such images after the US Occupation.<sup>9</sup> In addition, in Japan, the photographic medium congealed in terms of camera production and sales, with the nation becoming a “camera empire” following the development and marketing of Single Lens Reflexive cameras (later with a 35mm lens).<sup>10</sup>

As stated earlier, postwar events such as the 1964 Tokyo Olympics (and later the 1970 Japan World Expo) further contributed to the production and circulation of images, during a boom in the construction of infrastructural public-work projects that began in the 1950s. These projects, to name just two of the most critically acclaimed, included Tange Kenzō’s shell structured Yoyogi Olympic Stadium (1964) and the first Shinkansen bullet train between Tokyo and Osaka (1964). Images of these projects were championed in photography and film, leading to maturation in the relationship between photography and built environments beginning in the mid-1950s throughout the 1960s. Architectural journals like *Shinkenchiku* (new architecture) and *Kenchiku Bunka* (architectural culture) emphasized extremely high visual quality in print by introducing photographs by highly-regarded photographers like Ishimoto Yasuhiro, whose photographs are examined in Chapter 1. Indeed, this construction-architecture-photography phenomenon, on the one hand, produced numerous opportunities for

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<sup>9</sup> Tokuyama Yoshio, *Genbaku to shashin* (The atomic bomb and photography) (Tokyo: Ochanomizu Shobō, 2005), 13.

<sup>10</sup> Beginning in the late fifties, mini cameras by manufacturers like Asahi Pentax, Nikon (F series), and Olympus (Olympus Penn series), surpassed the popularity of the 35mm German-made Leica camera (models like M3 and IIIf). Kondō Hideki, “Kokusan kamera no tenkanki kara seikyō no jidai e” (Japan-made cameras: from the transition period to prosperity), in *Shōwa 10-40 nen Kōkoku ni miru kokusan kamera no rekishi* (Shōwa 10-40: the history of Japan-made cameras as seen in advertisements), ed. Asahi kamera and Sakai Shūichi (Tokyo: Asahi Shinbunsha, 1994), 452-57.

younger photographers to specialize in the photography of architecture and urbanism, and on the other, it stimulated the vision-based economy through the issuance and circulation of books and magazines filled with images of these new developments.

My principal argument in this dissertation is that, during Japan's politically and socially turbulent period between 1953 and 1970, printed visual materials, in particular photographs (artistic or vernacular), and visual apparatuses (i.e., cameras), which were amply available through an active economy (i.e., the height of Japan's *kōdo keizai seichō*, meaning the era of the rapid growth of the Japanese economy, which began in 1960 and continued for a decade), played a vital role in inspiring and enabling the architects and artists surveyed here, to imagine and project their own visions of a desirable urban space or an archetype of the city. These architects and artists had witnessed the completely destroyed Japanese cities at the end of World War II, and I contend that photography suggested to them the possibility of constructing a new spatiality and temporality. Because of the medium's democratic characteristics (i.e., availability, elasticity and flexibility), the protagonists in the dissertation accessed photographs that others had created, and utilized them freely, amply, and creatively. By cropping, cutting, stretching, collaging, montaging, and drawing on photographs they often took an iconoclastic approach to the subject matters of the images and to the culture surrounding them, and created their own commentaries, mostly visually but sometimes together with a text. Additionally, I argue that the period of 1953 to 1970 witnessed a discursive shift in the selected architects' and artists' visions of the city and urbanism, and that such a shift often occurred through the intermediation of photography, as manifested in the unbuilt designs, books, photographs, or writings of these architects and artists. Further, I posit that such a shift began to materialize as they critically internalized the fraught legacy of Japan's prewar and interwar imperialism and fascism. An important part of my task is to inquire how the emergence of their

new visions occurred in response to society's resistance against, collision with and/or acceptance of the ruins of the old regime.

The dissertation will not discuss in general the genre of architectural photography. I believe that architectural photography is a type of photography that transforms, through multiple layers of translation, a three-dimensional building (or a built environment) into a two-dimensional image. Rather, the dissertation will discuss photography and other printed visual materials that inspired the architects and artists, as elastic raw materials, to imagine cities. This means that the materials I will examine in the dissertation are not exclusively images of built environments. Instead, they comprise a wide range of images, often fragments or sedimentations, which provide architects and artists the means to decipher their visions of the city. To them, a photograph is often a palimpsest, where other images, texts, and thoughts have been brought, and where the resultant image is abstract and multilayered in its meaning.

## **Methodology**

My principal analytical methodology is broadly drawn from Michel Foucault's approach to history, archaeology, and genealogy demonstrated mainly in his writings, *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (1972) and "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History" (1971). I position the histories subject to my investigation as multiple, overlapping and sometimes even in contestation, understanding postwar Japanese history as a web-like network of information, documents, images, and actions. My discussion does not offer a monolithic or teleological view of history. Instead, I hope the selected case studies reveal collectively a nuanced relationship between photography/visual materials and cities/built environments in order to understand Japanese modernity. The study maps certain aspects of avant-garde architecture and art from the period under consideration, which enables me to more freely analyze Japan's cultural, social and political

complexities and identities during the period, which was full of incidents of “incoherence, instability, discontinuity, constantly invoking ideas of the accidental and the haphazard.”<sup>11</sup>

An aspect of my analysis involves “isolating various orders of discourse,” in a Foucaultian sense, which laid down the conditions for articulating thoughts, ideas, and propositions. One such discourse is the tradition discourse, which emerged in Japan, particularly in art and architecture, in the mid-1950s, and the interwar “overcoming modernity” discourse. These discourses were based on a series of round-table discussions and essays (with—in the case of the former—and without—in the case of the latter—images and photography) that appeared in journals and other types of publications.

Viewing aspects of the selected avant-garde and interdisciplinary architecture and art practices during the investigation period as sharing certain motivations, strategies and goals, I inquire into a wide range of questions, including how each of the protagonists emerged, how they desired to work collaboratively, and what their shared motivations were under the specific political, social and cultural conditions in Japan at that time. In examining their artistic projects, I am interested in tracing and exploring discontinuities, ruptures, disruptions or even unities from Japan’s prewar and interwar imperialism as an antithetical but integral force for their creative production. In my analysis, I will attempt to delineate a pattern of disruptions, and moments of transformation or threshold, when the protagonists’ ways of thinking, operating or looking underwent significant changes at the juncture of historical, political and cultural confluences during the 1950s and 1960s.

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<sup>11</sup> Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge & the Discourse on Language*, trans. A.M. Sheridan Smith (New York: Pantheon, 1972), 4-5.

## **Image, Imagination and Imagined Community**

As noted earlier, Japan became increasingly industrialized, starting in the early 1950s. Pursuing ambitious economic and industrial policies, it accumulated capital at an accelerated speed. As a result, an increasingly capitalist and material-driven *Taishū shakai* (mass society) emerged by the end of the 1960s. Significantly, a central feature of this mass society was its emphasis on *Gurafu bunka* (visual graphic culture), which was in part supported by the large circulations of numerous magazines and journals filled with images, mainly photographs (which documented and interpreted the progress and development of the nation), as well as by a visual technology of representation, the camera.

I assert that these images, cumulatively, gave many Japanese architects and artists the vision to share, and the materials to reflect on, their past and look forward to the future. For example, most notably, an image of the *yakeato* of downtown Tokyo, photographed in 1945, served such a purpose. Benedict Anderson's thesis of the role of printed materials in relation to the formation of a nation and nationalism, as demonstrated in his *Imagined Communities* (1991, and revised 2006), is relevant to this study for the purposes of investigating the relationship between images and the imagining of the city by the selected architects and artists. I add photography, a well-circulated image, to Anderson's list of the intermediary materials, namely, maps, museums, and censuses. Echoing Anderson's claim that certain maps and museums worked to help people imagine themselves united in a community, even without knowing each other, I argue that the selected and translated images, in varying degrees, through the hands of architects and artists, were processed and delivered to a wider audience otherwise not reachable.

In his essay, "Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy," Arjun Appadurai adds another valuable aspect to Anderson's analysis. Positioning the

imagination as a social practice in today's global cultural process of migration, he emphasizes the importance of the following three elements for the purposes of grasping "a new role for the imagination in social life."<sup>12</sup> They are "the idea of images, especially mechanically produced images (in the Frankfurt School sense); the idea of imagined community (in Anderson's sense); and the French idea of the imaginary (*imaginaire*), as a constructed landscape of collective aspirations ... now mediated through the complex prism of modern media." All of the three elements are present in my case studies. For example, the unbuilt designs of megastructure cities by Kurokawa Kishō, a Metabolist architect, meet these criteria. Having procured a mass-produced photograph of a structural model of DNA, he drew a helix-shaped megastructure city on it, and presented it as the imaginary landscape of a constructed mechanism for ideal collective habitation. For members of Metabolism, imagination, mediated by visual materials and circulation, was not only an artistic practice but also a social and political practice.

### **Visual Economy**

The concept of visual economy is an important methodological component of my dissertation. Anthropologist Deborah Poole, in her book, *Vision, Race and Modernity* (1997), analyzes the late 19<sup>th</sup> to early 20<sup>th</sup> century vernacular photography of native tribes from the Andes, and investigates their circulation throughout Europe in relation to images of the tribes constructed through the intervention of those images in Europe. The concept of "visual economy" denotes a system of economy, within which visual materials are produced, circulated, and consumed. It is the cultural and discursive system through which visual materials, including photographs, are

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<sup>12</sup> Arjun Appadurai, "Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy" in *Colonial Discourse and Post-Colonial Theory: A Reader*, ed. Patrick Williams and Laura Chrisman (New York: Columbia UP, 1994), 327.

“appraised, interpreted, and assigned historical, scientific, and aesthetic worth.”<sup>13</sup> The term “economy” also suggests that “the field of vision” is organized systematically, and, being relational, it could create “social relationship, inequality, and power as with shared meanings and community.”<sup>14</sup> Further, Poole sets forth the three levels of the concept’s organization. It involves (1) an organization of production encompassing both the individuals and the technologies that produce images, (2) the circulation of goods or, in my case, images and image-objects, which overlap with (3) the level on which an economy of vision must be assessed. She explains the last part as “the cultural and discursive systems through which graphic images are appraised, interpreted, and assigned historical, scientific, and aesthetic worth.”<sup>15</sup> Poole argues that it is imperative to investigate not what any specific image means, but rather, how images accrue value as a whole and have an impact upon society.

Interpreting Poole’s analytical framework broadly, I expand the subjects of my analysis to include an illustrated manifesto and an art and architecture journal, in addition to images, such as photographs—both fine art and found/vernacular—and drawings. In particular, Bijutsu Shuppansha, the leading art publisher that published the Metaborisumu (Metabolism) manifesto in 1960 (the subject of Chapter 2); the most popular monthly journal of modern and contemporary art in postwar Japan, *Bijutsu Techō* (Art notebook); and all of the important books by Isozaki published in the 1960s and 1970s, will be treated as an important organization of production and circulation in my analysis.

Specifically, I examine selected issues of journal publications, namely *Shinken-chiku* and *Bijutsu Techō*. I position the former as the main venue for the

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<sup>13</sup> Deborah Poole, *Vision, Race and Modernity: A Visual Economy of the Andean Image World* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 1997), 9.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 10.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*



mid-1950s tradition debate and the latter as the venue to discuss experimental inter-media art during the 1960s. The two journals contributed significantly not only to the dissemination of architects' and artists' visions, but also they provided readers with fresh and often critical information on modern art and architecture from abroad.<sup>16</sup> The journals themselves, as well as books like *Katsura* (the subject of Chapter 1) can thus be considered a self-contained space, a mirror space, arguably as a laboratory for the dialectics of tradition and modernity, mediated by the included visual materials.

I argue that the book format was seen as a constructed temporal "other" space to express complex ideas regarding the archetype of a city: during the 1960s, most significant monographs of architecture and urbanism were produced and circulated by a few major distributors, most notably the aforementioned Bijutsu Shuppansha. I will argue that these monographs, together with the journals, constituted the core of visual

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<sup>16</sup> Further, I will determine how each of the publications (including essays, articles, and images) was evaluated and assigned a value in terms of conveying a creator's vision. For example, in the field of photography, most of the major popular journals that (have) continued for more than three decades, such as *Kamera mainichi* (June 1954-April 1985) and *Nippon kamera* (March 1950 – the present), started in the 1950s but their first peak in circulation occurred during the 1960s. More importantly, photography journals concerned with critical visual investigations of society, such as *Provoke* (November 1968-August 1969), *Shashin eizō* (The photo image) (May 1969-December 1971), and *Shashin hiyō* (Photo review) (April 1973-August 1974) were produced beginning in the late 1960s, although all of them, due to economic reasons, were short-lived. Nonetheless, these more ephemeral journals collectively played a significant role in transforming the nature and potential of journals to become an intellectual instrument for the audience and the contributors to create a critical voice. This observation is also applicable to architecture journals from the decade. Journals like *Kenchiku bunka* (Culture of architecture), and *Shinkenchiku* (New architecture), which published its first issue in 1945, significantly expanded their circulations in the 1960s. (In 1959, the publisher of *Shinkenchiku* began publishing an English version of the journal, *The Japan Architect*, expecting to develop a market outside of Japan.) Indeed, the journal became the venue for a series of debates over modernity and tradition in architecture and design in postwar Japan. Collectively, these journals with critical and radical contents and images made a strong visual impact, inspiring their audiences (as well as the architects and artists in the dissertation) to imagine a new city form.

and intellectual techno for many architects and artists, for their imaginary productions relating to the city. For example, the above-mentioned Kurokawa Kishō, mentioned earlier, created a visually sumptuous monograph, titled *Kurokawa Kishō no sakuhin* (1970) (Works of Kurokawa Kishō). It is an oversized and meticulously well-designed book, using four colors and including numerous photographs, plans and drawings to visualize his philosophy of “metamorphosis” and his concept of the “capsule” in architecture, urbanism, and technology. (The book, also published by Bijutsu Shuppansha, comes with a vinyl recording of electronic sounds with a synthesized voice that advocates the architect’s capsule architecture. The book includes a dozen drawings related to the concept of metamorphosis, such as those of *jigoku-e*, or hell pictures, and mandalas.) Sugiura Kōhei, the graphic designer and one of Isozaki Arata’s collaborators for the installation, *Electric Labyrinth* (the subject of Chapter 3), designed the book, revealing in its layout and composition his and his contemporaries’ anxieties over defining the time-space construct at that time. The same designer designed other notable books that share those anxieties, and although they are not discussed in the dissertation, they include a photobook by photographer Takanashi Yukata, titled *Toshi e* (Towards the city) (1974), and another, titled *Chizu* (Map) (1965), by photographer Kawada Kikuji.<sup>17</sup> These books were not luxury coffee-table books. I argue that each of them represented the force of the photographers’ critical visions and imaginations of the city, and constituted a space, or a city, they imagined, jointly realized by the book design.

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<sup>17</sup> *Toshi e* was an oversized book of approximately fifty black and white blurry images of Tokyo shot in the late 1960s, while *Chizu* was an ornately designed book with folding high-contrast black and white images of the Hiroshima atomic bomb dome and A-bomb victims. Yutaka Takanashi, *Toshi-e* (Towards the city) (Tokyo: Izara Shobō, 1974), and Kawada Kikuji, *Chizu* (Map) (Tokyo: Bijutsu Shuppansha, 1965).

In summary, the visual economy analysis will enable me to inquire into “the representational politics, cultural dichotomies, and discursive boundaries”<sup>18</sup> of certain aspects of the avant-garde art and architecture concerning cities in Japan from 1953 to 1970. The methodology will also allow me to examine relational and economic aspects of the protagonists’ visions, many of whom later participated in Expo ’70. The Expo, which produced an enormous volume of images of its architecture, events, and mass participants, represented the rapidly expanding visual economy of Japan through 1970.

## **Archive**

Another set of Foucauldian concerns I wish to explore is the concept of the “archive” in relation to the “document.” Foucault defines the former as “the general system of the formation and transformation of statements.”<sup>19</sup> He suggests that questioning “the document” is extremely important for a historian, as it allows the document to be transformed from “a dull memory” to being important in and of itself. On this, Foucault writes, “[History] is one way in which a society recognizes and develops a mass of documentation with which it is inextricably linked.”<sup>20</sup> When I analyze a plan, a piece of writing, a drawing or a photograph in this dissertation, I consider it as a document, and the constellation of images and texts that I have gathered as an archive. In conjunction with thorough and careful archival research on various elements of the entire dissertation, such a system of thinking and investigating, I propose, enables architecture, art, and photography to be mutually and inextricably linked to each other, and such an approach will allow me to decipher a proposed vision of the protagonists.

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<sup>18</sup> Poole, 11.

<sup>19</sup> Michel Foucault, “The Historical *a priori* and the Archive,” *The Archaeology of Knowledge & the Discourse on Language*, 130.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

The dissertation, in effect, examines how these selected architects and artists interpreted and utilized the printed visual materials they saw, collected, or created. For example, Isozaki's personal collection of images and photographs became the source of the visual materials, and also the inspiration, for the installation, *Electric Labyrinth*, the subject of Chapter 3. Tange's own snapshots, as will be discussed in Chapter 1, were compiled by Katō Toshiko, Tange's first wife, in the numerous Tange family photography albums, and they provided the architect with a structure of looking, as well as a method to cultivate his vision of a city, and his thoughts on the dialectics of tradition and modernity.

### **Collectivism and Collaboration**

Japan in the 1950s and 1960s underwent a series of anti-governmental protests that contributed markedly, along with numerous other social, political, and economic factors, to the formation of Japan's identity as a modern democratic nation. Arguably stemming from these conditions, there emerged a desire among artists and architects "to speak as a nation," and thereby to engage with "[the] distinct and significant [social] transformation" in postwar Japan.<sup>21</sup> As art historian Reiko Tomii argues in her essay, "After the 'Descent to the Everyday': Japanese Collectivism from High Red Center to the Play, 1964-1973," a new form of collectivism, "collaborative collectivism" emerged in the 1960s, "as Anti-Art practitioners increasingly breached the walls of the exhibition hall and departed from the institutional site of art."<sup>22</sup> Tomii sites, as an example of such collectivism, the three-person artist collective, Haireddo

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<sup>21</sup> Stimson, Blake, and Gregory Sholette, "Introduction: Periodizing Collectivism" in *The Art of Social Imagination after 1945* (Minneapolis: U Minn Press: Minneapolis, 2007), 3.

<sup>22</sup> Tomii Reiko, "After the 'Descent to the Everyday': Japanese Collectivism from Hi Red Center to The Play, 1964-1973," in *The Art of Social Imagination after 1945*, 46.

Sentaaa (High Red Center), whose 1964 street performance, Cleaning Event, is emblematic of such a trend.<sup>23</sup> My analysis reveals, however, that the types of collaboration observed in my case studies are not quite as collaborative, as the High Red Center, where each member was equal. Nevertheless, what complements her study in my dissertation is a study of postwar Japanese interdisciplinary collectivism, in particular that of architects and visual artists. Sharing some of the artists' ideological concerns and motivations, the architects in my study, namely Tange and Isozaki, took a primary and leading role in a collaborative project.

## Technology

The issue of technology in relation to its application to interdisciplinary and alternative design practices during the period of 1953-1970 is also discussed in the dissertation. Of particular relevance is the waning dominance of the Modernist architecture movement by the late 1960s. The shift in technology, for example, from a big machine to cybernetics, coincided with the slow death of the movement, which was often associated with "The International Style." This death was noted by Reyner Banham—who claimed 1970 as the end of the movement, in his introduction to the second edition of *Theory and Design in the First Machine Age* (1980)—and also by Arata Isozaki, who wrote a series of essays in the late 1960s, titled *Kenchiku no kaitai* (The Dismantling of Architecture). Recently, in *Architecture or Techno-Utopia* (2007), architectural theorist Felicity Scott focused on a set of experimental

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<sup>23</sup> From the mid-1960s through the mid-1970s, collaborative collectivism became a considerable force in the vanguard scenes, characterized by various tenets of Non-Art (*Hi-geijutsu*). Collaborative collectivism roughly paralleled Euro-American post-minimal and conceptual tendencies, and were aptly captured by the Second Kyoto Biennale, organized by the Kyoto Municipal Museum of Art in 1973, under the theme of "art by collectives (*shūdan*).” Further, Tomii categorizes Japan’s artistic collectivism from 1964 to 1973 into different kinds of collectivism, such as “inadvertent collectivism” and “participatory collectivism.” Ibid., 47.

architectural practices and polemics that emerged in the late 1960s and early 1970s in the U.S., and embraced the visionary possibilities of the paradigm called “techno-utopia.” Scott examines complex and nuanced encounters between architecture and new technologies at the upturn of postmodernism, tracing selected examples of alternative architecture practice to Modernist influences. Part of my dissertation also delineates the shift, during the investigation period, in the protagonists’ grappling with, and attitude (i.e., fascination and disillusionment) towards, new technologies and materials made available in postwar Japan, in the process of being confronted with the increasingly vexing dichotomy of modernity and tradition.

### **Tradition and Modernity**

Some efforts will be made to observe and examine the notion of “tradition,” and the binary of tradition and modernity in each case study throughout the dissertation. In his book, *Overcome by Modernity*, Harry Harootunian investigates how, during WWII, Japanese intellectuals were addressing and contemplating the issue of modernity in Japan vis-à-vis modernity embraced by their European counterparts.<sup>24</sup> As historian Tze May Loo points out, Harootunian traces how Japanese intellectuals in interwar Japan attempted to secure, through the discourse “overcoming modernity,” “the present in the stability of immutable culture and the ancient past...confronted with the destabilizing effects of capitalism.”<sup>25</sup> The historical circumstances for such intellectuals’ conscious mediation over the notion of tradition in the interwar years of

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<sup>24</sup> Harry Harootunian, *Overcome by Modernity: History, Culture, and Community in Interwar Japan* (New Jersey: Princeton UP, 2000). See also his *History’s Disquiet: Modernity, cultural practice, and the question of everyday life* (New York: Columbia UP, 2000)

<sup>25</sup> Tze May Loo, “Treasures of a Nation: Cultural Heritage Preservation and the Making of Shuri Castle in Prewar Japan” (Ph.D. diss., Cornell University, 2007), 23.

Japan can be related to the political and social circumstances in the nation's immediate postwar years.

Defining Japan's modernity was an obsessive but inevitable project among those Japanese involved in cultural production after the Meiji Restoration. But the balancing of the often-conflicting sets of values in such a project (for example, Western modernity vs. Japanese tradition) was a difficult and sensitive task, depending on the political, social and ideological dynamics of society at any given time. Arguably, the tradition discourse can be seen as the lasting influence of the 1942 debate, "overcoming modernity," which was constructed through roundtable discussions in the literary journal, *Bungakukai* (The world of literature). The lasting legacy of the debate can be found in a comment by Isozaki, who stated in his writing that since 1942 the substance of architectural symposia had remained sterile "because participants simply either praised or rejected the modern vis-à-vis a Japanese aesthetics or ethos"<sup>26</sup> and did not produce anything meaningful. But he, too, acknowledged that the phenomenon of the symposium still had some resonance in contemporary culture. He argued that architects had a better handle on the issue of modernity than others, stating that architects "at least came to see modernity and tradition as two sides of a single issue, articulating a stance by means of which to critique both at the same time."<sup>27</sup> Isozaki's assertion is persuasive in the sense that some Japanese architects who emerged before or during World War II were able to manage and maintain their careers after the war by shifting their positions regarding the issue of modernity and tradition. These architects, among them Taniguchi Yoshio and Tange Kenzō, knew it was simply a matter of adjusting the balance of the two values.

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<sup>26</sup> Isozaki, *Japan-ness in Architecture*, 20-21.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

As architectural critic Kawazoe Noboru acknowledged in his 1961 essay the tradition discourse was constructed in the early 1950s as a necessary means to allow architectural designs to be adapted fully to the lifestyle of the Japanese people, and respond to Japan's specific circumstances, such as the structure of the architecture and construction industries, and the system of manufacturing.<sup>28</sup> But he traced such a need for the discourse, neither to a sense of crisis among the Japanese nor to an anti-authoritarian sentiment, shared by Japanese architects at that time, but to their shared desire to simply create a better architecture.<sup>29</sup> Kawazoe's functionalist interpretation was somewhat echoed by Tange, who investigated the roles of Japanese premodern architecture in developing his postwar designs. But for Tange, in design, the role of function was as important as that of expression. In this relation, the dissertation will first investigate in Chapter 1 the polemics and strategies of architect Tange as expressed in the making of the 1960 publication, *Katsura: Tradition and Creation in Japanese Architecture*. Extremely visual in its orientation, with frequent usage of photographs of both vernacular and modern architecture, and of objects that accompanied numerous essays by architects, critics, and artists, the debate took place mainly in architectural journals, such as *Shinkenchiku* and *Kenchiku Bunka*. Orchestrated by Kawazoe Noboru, architectural critic and editor for *Shinkenchiku*, and actively engaged by Tange, the debate examined the meaning of tradition in modern design through essays (core essays written by Kawazoe and Tange, respectively) and photographs that accompanied the essays, which appeared in the journal issues published mainly in 1955 and 1956. In particular, in this first chapter, I argue that Tange located the 1960 publication as his conclusion on the tradition debate, and he

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<sup>28</sup> Kawazoe Noboru, "Kokumin chitsujo no keisei – iwayuru Nihon teki na mono ni kanrenshite" (Formation of the national order – in relation to things so called Japanese), *Shisō* 75, no. 449 (November, 1961): 1383.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.



revealed his nuanced position on his postwar designs through his essay as well as through his editing and manipulation of the photographs shot by Ishimoto Yasuhiro. With his photographic and editing intervention, he repositioned Japan's premodern imperial architecture both as an aesthetic source of innovation and invention for the design creation of postwar Japan and "the eternal source of innovation and invention" for most of the design creation of the West. In the project of the making of *Katsura*, one could argue that Japan's imperial past reclaims from the West its centrality in locating modernity, but, interestingly, Tange's constructed sense of continuity from the past may also be seen to constitute itself as anti-modern.

## **The Structure of the Dissertation**

### **Chapter 1: Photographic collaboration by Ishimoto Yasuhiro and Tange Kenzō: *Katsura: Tradition and Creation in Japanese Architecture* (1960)**

Chapter One sets forth the political, social, cultural, artistic and intellectual backgrounds shared by the architects and artists in the dissertation, as well as the debate on the dialectical relationship between, and collision of, tradition and modernity, beginning in the early 1950s, through a comprehensive examination of the 1960 photographic publication on the 17<sup>th</sup> century Katsura Imperial Villa. The publication, configured in a book format and arguably seen as the archetype of a city, was created through the collaboration of Ishimoto Yasuhiro, Tange Kenzō, Walter Gropius, and Herbert Bayer. There, Tange, the general and picture editor of the book, in addition to being the author of the essay accompanying Ishimoto's photographs, expressed his ideas on modernism and tradition, arguing that certain expressions and functions of the 17<sup>th</sup> century imperial architecture and garden are relevant in postwar design and creation. Three centuries after its construction, during the 1950s, Katsura was placed at the center of the aforementioned *dentō ronsō* discourse by architects

attempting to reevaluate Japanese tradition in relation to modern architecture. As noted above, this discourse was created amidst the culture of journals of architecture, which were illustrated with ample photographs of both pre-modern and modern structures. Each architect involved in the debate, informed by his particular design ideas, brought his own assumptions and methods to bear in deconstructing the Katsura villa. In the interpretive discourse surrounding it, the 1960 publication has proven to be the most visually and intellectually intriguing contribution. This chapter focuses on this publication, particularly the nature of the collaboration between Tange and Ishimoto, placing particular emphasis on the cropping and sequencing of Ishimoto's photographs rendered by Tange. I argue that the photographic vision of Ishimoto, who was trained at the Institute of Design in Chicago in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, cast in an unprecedented light the abstract and fragmented visual interpretations of Katsura. I further argue that although Ishimoto's aesthetics permeated the publication to some degree, Tange's intervention by cropping and sequencing Ishimoto's photographs revealed the force of the architect's own vision of tradition and modernity. Through this process, Ishimoto's Modernist aesthetics were subordinated to Tange's own agenda to maintain his position in the immediate postwar years by referring to premodern Japanese architecture as an inspiration for his modern architecture. For these purposes, I will examine some of the photographs published in the 1960 publication, compare them to Ishimoto's unedited prints, and analyze them in relation to Tange's position on tradition and modern architecture.

Importantly, Ishimoto's photographs inspired Tange—who had previously snapped with his 35mm Leica the 17<sup>th</sup> century architecture and other vernacular pre-modern Japanese architectures—to conclude, vis-a-vis the then-ongoing tradition debate, that the simplicity of materials, and the geometric units and composition of the architectural design, both function and expression, of Katsura transcend a

Japan-specific time and place. With his fascist past, as seen in his award winning designs during World War II, an eclectic combination of modern materials and premodern expressions, Tange needed to find a way to maintain his past position while suitably re-positioning himself in relation to Japanese tradition in Japan's postwar democratic environments. By taking the position that tradition exists as "an integral part of the self,"<sup>30</sup> Tange asserted that such tradition must be first questioned, denied, and destroyed so that it can be transformed into creative force. Seeing such transformative acts as a source of creative energy for postwar architectural practice, in the 1960 publication he visualized such a dynamic transformation by violently cropping Ishimoto's photography without the young photographer's consent.

## **Chapter 2: *Metabolism: Proposal for a New Urbanism* and the August 1955 issue of the architecture journal *Shinkenchiku***

The architects, graphic designer and architecture critic of the collective blessed by Tange, Metabolism, imagined the new Japanese city as consisting of organic megastructures of skyscrapers, floating islands and superhighways. Only a few of their designs were realized later, and a majority of their designs, which were unfolded in the 1960 manifesto *Metabolism: Proposal for a New Urbanism*, have remained unbuilt. I contend that their designs comprise an antithetical response to Tange's position that premodern structures, as embodied by Katsura, serve as a design inspiration. Like Tange, Metabolism presented its members' visions in a publication, and although admittedly its circulation was fairly limited (unlike Tange's *Katsura*), it nevertheless had an influential and long-lasting impact on the modern design community, due to its timely and effective release at the 1960 World Design Conference in Tokyo. The manifesto, *Metabolism*, includes not only architectural blueprints, but also several

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<sup>30</sup> Tange Kenzō, "An Approach to Tradition," *The Japan Architect* (January–February 1959): 59–65, as quoted in Jonathan M. Reynolds, "Ise Shrine and a Modernist Construction of Japanese Tradition," *The Art Bulletin* 83, no. 2 (June 2001): 324.

photographs, most notably an image of the ocean by Hamaya Hiroshi. Many of the utopian drawings and plans incorporated in part a photograph. For the collective's seven members, who were a generation younger than Tange, Japanese tradition meant something considerably different from what it had meant to Tange. My claim is that it was rather their belief in systems, such as science and Marxism, and the architects' specific experiences as yet-unformed adolescents witnessing the ruins of a city at the end of the war (as remembered through photography) that enabled them to believe that the seemingly utopian megastructure presented the most suitable form as an archetype of the city. For many of the Metabolists, cities by definition were susceptible to nuclear attack, and thus needed to be easily renewable. Questing for a system that supports the organic growth of the city, in presenting the Metabolist designs, the group addressed fundamental questions about "what it meant to be Japanese in the postwar world."<sup>31</sup>

The systematic nature of science and rational thinking was at the core of Metabolism's belief in urban development. Anticipating that Japanese cities would grow to become mega-sized, Metabolism attempted to create a new organic system by embracing the technology and science available at that time. Espousing the view that traditional laws of form and function were becoming obsolete in megacities like Tokyo, the architects believed that new 'scientific' laws of space and functional transformation would help the city to further metamorphose, despite the fact that Metabolism's concrete megastructures were criticized as "bulky, brutalist, ponderous,

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<sup>31</sup> Cherie Wendelken, "Putting Metabolism Back in Place: The Making of a Radically Decontextualized Architecture in Japan," *Anxious Modernism*, ed. Sarah Williams Goldhagen, and Rejean Legault (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press in association with Canadian Center for Architecture, 2000) 280. Wendelken argues that Metabolism was a form of cultural nihilism that came out of "the trauma of defeat in war" followed by the US occupation and reflected "the anxiety of a new prosperity built upon two subsequent foreign wars, fought in Korea and Vietnam but commanded from its shores." Ibid.

and irregular.”<sup>32</sup> In addition, the collective’s name, Metabolism, implies the architects’ belief in scientific revitalization of the city (and the notion of Buddhist reincarnation). It also meant a certain systematic structure of space and thinking, while simultaneously referring to science and biology, thereby hinting at the collective’s Marxist leanings.

The group’s manifesto was a powerful device to inform the international architectural community of the emergence and radical nature of the collectivism. The ambitious, 88-page manifesto was single-handedly compiled by the leader of the collective, architectural critic Kawazoe Noboru, then distributed by the group members at the World Design Conference in Tokyo in 1960. In addition, the collective’s individual members’ city plans were circulated both through Japanese architectural journals from the late 1950s to the early 1960s, and their respective monographs, in effect making their design plans an icon of Japan’s postwar utopian architecture.

This chapter also positions the August 1955 issue of the architecture journal, *Shinkenchiku*, as an intellectual and visual incubator for the 1960 manifesto. Likewise edited by Kawazoe, it surveyed the history of postwar urban development through specific key photographs, such as an aerial image of the decimated capital of Japan. The chapter additionally takes up a dialogue between the architect, Asada Takashi, and physicist, Takeya Mitsuo, which emphasized the importance of collectivism as a form to help Japan in its transition from the age of victimization by the nuclear bombs to that of possessing nuclear power.

### **Chapter 3: Arata Isozaki and *Electric Labyrinth* (1968)**

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<sup>32</sup> Reyner Banham, *Megastructure: urban futures of the recent past* (capitalize) (New York: Harper & Row, 1976), 46.

Chapter 3 examines the multimedia and multisensory installation, *Electric Labyrinth* (1968), that Isozaki created for the 14<sup>th</sup> Milan Triennial (1968) in collaboration with photographer Tōmatsu Shōmei, composer and pianist Ichiyanagi Toshi, graphic designer Sugiura Kōhei, and sound engineer Okuyama Yukio. The chapter also relates to Isozaki's selected writings from the late 1950s to the 1960s, which illuminate his philosophy of urbanism and time. This philosophy, represented by his statement, "a ruin is the future of our city, and the future city is a ruin itself,"<sup>33</sup> reflects his experience of having grown up in a completely destroyed city, Ōita, during and immediately after the war. The installation underscores his critical attitude, through a cascade of images of life, death and the space in between, which emerge and disappear in the moving structure, reflecting his continuing interest in the long-lasting issue of Japan's modernity and tradition. The installation also signifies the seemingly collaborative nature of Isozaki's artistic practice, although, as I argue, the project was ultimately Isozaki's. The chapter will explore the architect's installation in relation to his prolific and insightful writings as well as his original way of selecting and reading images for the installation. Isozaki's and each of the collaborators' accounts will contextualize the gap in intent, desire and motivation for each contributor involved in the installation project.

The installation consists of architectural and visual elements, including numerous historical prints and documentary photographs that address the cycle of life, death and rebirth. In this sense, the installation itself is an allegory. The revolving and cybernetic structure of the installation allowed viewers to experience continuous and numerous moments of 'shift' and 'transformation' in the city of Hiroshima (the archetype of the city for Isozaki), crystallizes the architect's belief that a city

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<sup>33</sup> Isozaki Arata, "Fuka Katei" (incubation period) in *Kukan e* (Towards space) (Tokyo: Bijutsu Shuppansha, 1972); republished as *Kukan e* (Tokyo: Kashima Shuppankai, 1997), 40.

(including its built environments) is destined to disappear and reemerge, and that the city itself is an abstract concept (as opposed to the city described as a concrete representation filled with buildings in the Western sense) meaning that an environment is made up of only natural elements like air, light and water. Thus, the installation embodies the pairing of concepts such as ‘emergence and disappearance,’ ‘construction and destruction,’ and ‘life and death.’ In Isozaki’s writings as well as in the installation, the city is always in transition and fragmentation.

The collaborative and interdisciplinary nature of the installation further indicates a new direction in Japanese avant-garde art in the decade, which ultimately resulted in the technological and massive collaboration project, the 1970 Japan Expo. The Expo utilized a wide range of artists and architects, including the members of the collaborative and interdisciplinary avant-garde art collective, Jikken Kōbō (Experimental Laboratory), founded in Tokyo in the mid-1950s. In addition, Isozaki’s meaningful interaction with thinkers, activists and artists (in particular those of the Neo-Dada movement in Tokyo) made him a hybrid, an architect with an entirely different profile from his modernist predecessors like Maekawa Kunio and Tange Kenzō.

What most distinguished Isozaki from other architects at the time are his critical and prolific writings interrogating the nature of Japanese tradition and its friction with western modernity. In principle, he denounced conventional nativism or Japan-ness, “a Japanese taste” created by non-Japanese. Searching for an alternative to such constructs, he argued that a simple binary opposition, like “the modern vis-à-vis a Japanese aesthetic or ethos,” as discussed in the aforementioned “overcoming modernity” debate in 1942, is a sterile one in light of the complexity of 20<sup>th</sup> century Japanese architectural and urbanist practices.<sup>34</sup> In connection to this inquiry, he

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<sup>34</sup> Isozaki, 109.

attempted to search for a matrix of Japan-ness and interject the Japanese concept of *ma* (space), and, in this process, introduces the notion of Japanese space as “spatial and performative,” while that of the West, he claims, is “constructive and objective.”<sup>35</sup>

My main task in this chapter is to carefully analyze Isozaki’s methodologies, writings and unbuilt projects during the 1960s to situate him as an enigmatic, provocative and original thinker and designer, a hybrid at the beginning of the intersection of art and architecture in postwar Japan.

#### **Chapter 4: The Symbol Zone Complex of the Japan Expo 1970: Architecture, Visual Representation, and Modernity**

The Japan Exposition 1970 (Expo ’70, or the “Expo”) in Osaka was the first world’s fair to take place in Asia. Held between March 15 and September 13, 1970, and exploring the theme of “Progress and Harmony for Mankind,” the Expo turned out to be extremely successful commercially, with a record attendance of 64,210,000. With the master plan designed by Tange Kenzō, it provided an excellent showcase for some of the Metabolist architects (such as Kurokawa Kishō and Kikutake Kiyonori) as well as Tange Kenzō. Visually and economically, it left a significant mark in postwar Japan up to 1970, incorporating many advanced aspects of postwar Japanese art and architecture. In addition, the Expo, with numerous futuristic module buildings and infrastructures such as a monorail and a moving pedestrian, was viewed in general as having taken its millions of attendees one step closer to a vision of the future city.

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<sup>35</sup> For a Japanese space of such characterization, Isozaki discusses an example designed by architect Horiguchi Sutemi. He points out that Horiguchi confined himself in a teahouse in Nara, where he devoted himself to studying the teahouses of the influential Sekishū school from the Edo period. This study allowed him to create a space of Japan-ness with a modernist compositional approach, and his design from this era, the early 1930s, remained significant in his oeuvre. Isozaki, 110-111.



The Expo's central gathering plaza, the Festival Plaza (known as *omatsuri hiroba*) was a multi-purpose gathering space designed by Isozaki. Centrally located within the Expo site, the plaza was covered with a space frame structure, a lightweight, rigid, truss-like structure constructed from interlocking struts in a geometric pattern (330 feet wide, 1,000 feet long and 100 feet above ground). It housed, among other things, artist Okamoto Tarō's totem pole-like Tower of the Sun (*taiyō-no-tō*), the expo's theme pavilion, which partially punctuated the frame. The plaza hosted numerous formal ceremonies and performances during the expo's six-month period. Attracting more than 64 million visitors, the expo was made a national enterprise, sponsored jointly by Japan's governmental, industrial and intellectual sectors, in order to showcase the event as a vital sign of the nation's recovery from World War II and of having become *de facto* a world-class economic power.

I assert that despite its seemingly triumphant and utopian atmosphere and general perception, the Festival Plaza, together with the Sun Tower, represented Isozaki's and Okamoto's respective challenges to the notion of linear history, as advocated in the expo under its theme, "Progress and Harmony for Mankind." (Borrowing a theoretical framework suggested by Sakai Naoki, one could argue that the Expo was "the spatio-temporal schema" specific to Japan's self-presentation as "modern," attained "by displacing the temporal onto the spatial and the spatial onto the temporal," in the orchestrated architectural and curatorial presentations of Japan's past, present and future "in a quasi-systematic way."<sup>36</sup>) In their plaza and tower projects, Isozaki and Okamoto, individually and in combination, appealed to Japan to seek out its own identity, or "Japan-ness" in the postwar context, referring to the aesthetics of the prehistoric Jōmon culture in the former, and to the disciplines of postmodernism in

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<sup>36</sup> Sakai Naoki, undated handout, "New Keywords: 2) Modernisation and Progress."

the latter, respectively. Isozaki and Okamoto challenged the notion of “modernity” that emanated from the West, and the notion of “tradition” invented by cultural elites, such as architect Tange Kenzō. Isozaki manifested his dystopian awareness of the future of cities that inexorably revert back to ruins; and Okamoto challenged the theme of the expo, countering it with his own theme, “Regression and Deviance for Mankind,” declaring that in Japan there was no linear history without a defined past or present. Their collaborative synergy made the plaza (including the tower) a cornerstone of avant-garde art and architecture in postwar Japan.

As outlined in the previous chapters, this chapter similarly investigates the importance of visuals, particularly photography, as raw material for elaboration and manipulation in Isozaki’s and Okamoto’s conception of their architectural and sculptural installation projects. Isozaki’s pursuit of the “invisible city” (*mienai toshi*), which he first conceived through photography, and later experimented with in his writings, was realized in the plaza project, which he characterized as a cybernetic environment. His indebtedness to certain photographs of the city (for example, Andreas Feininger’s photos of New York City’s skylines) will be discussed, while Okamoto’s inspirations from Japanese prehistorical objects, such as Jōmon clay dolls and the photographs he shot of them, will be examined as among his visual inspirations for the tower project. Ultimately, the expo, which lasted only for six months, and most of which was dismantled afterwards, reinforced Isozaki’s belief that the future city itself is a ruin and a ruin is in the future city.

### **Epilogue: Visual Criticism of Expo ’70**

The conclusion chapter will examine selected works of criticism of the expo, presented by conceptual artist Akasegawa Genpei and photographer Tōmatsu Shōmei, that were featured in independent journals in 1970. Although these featured works

were not created collaboratively, I position them as constituting a portion of the work, in a larger discursive field, that arose from intellectual and artistic practice based on the common and shared property of printed and circulated art journals. Tōmatsu published a photo essay, titled “Banpaku yarō” (the Expo bastard) in a journal he independently issued for a short period of time, *Ken*, and Akasegawa created work within the collective format, most notably with the collective, High Red Center. His lone spread project, in the July 1970 special issue of *Bijutsu techō*, and entitled “Ekisupo nanaju ningen to bunmei” (Expo ’70 humans and civilization), has a special featured section, titled “Banpaku atochi no sairyo ni kansuru teian” (A proposal for the reuse of the former site of the Expo), where seven artists and architects expressed their ideal plans for potential usage of the expo site before it closed in September. The section as a whole presented itself as a collective work of the selected artists. The two journals, despite their gap in circulation, presented an avant-garde aspect of printed visual materials, similarly employing a postmodern strategy of appropriation and the use of the technique of collage, repeatedly using a readymade image created by others. Both projects, Akasegawa’s conceptual work and Tōmatsu’s photomontage, undeniably assisted readers to imagine a place for Japan’s failed future in a magazine format.

The objective of my dissertation, in which I analyze the imagining and visual creation of new prototypes of the city by selected architects and artists, in collaboration in Japan during the period of 1953-1970, is to reveal a discursive shift in the way these protagonists envisioned the city through the intermediation of visual materials, in particular photography. The visions of the city presented by these architects and artists were not only imaginary, anarchistic, subversive, and riotous at the time, rooted as they were in their ideological views, but also they were compatible, to some extent, with those of their European and American counterparts. It is important to note that

instead of working in a Japanese vacuum, they learned and observed their Western counterparts' artistic manifestations, internalized them, and created their own manifestations specific to the circumstances shaping postwar Japan. Like Japanese artists active in that decade in the fields of performance, painting and sculpture, who often took an “anti-art” approach and created non-conventional strategies, the architects and artists in my study “reflected the gestalt of the postwar Japanese psyche – absolute loss and absolute freedom”<sup>37</sup> in their pursuit of imagining the city in the years following the war.

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<sup>37</sup> Munroe, Alexandra. *Japanese Art after 1945: Scream against the Sky* (New York: N.H. Abrams, 1994), 24.

## CHAPTER 1

### ***KATSURA: CREATION AND TRADITION IN JAPANESE ARCHITECTURE***

(1960)

#### **ISHIMOTO YASUHIRO'S *KATSURA*—REEXAMINED AND REVISITED**

Whenever a photographer “speaks” via his photographs, he may be likened . . . to a kind of visual linguist. By this analogy, then, Yasuhiro Ishimoto is a visual bilingualist: Japanese by heritage, his tradition of seeing are Oriental; Western by schooling at the Chicago Institute of Design (the contemporary center of the Bauhaus tradition), he speaks visual English with a German accent.

—Minor White, *Photographs by Yasuhiro Ishimoto*<sup>38</sup>

In 1953 Ishimoto Yasuhiro (born 1921)(Figure 1.1) returned to Japan after fourteen years in the United States, including four years of training in basic design and photography at the Illinois Institute of Technology's Institute of Design (also known as the “New Bauhaus,” or simply the “ID”). Ishimoto's photography evinced a combination of the experimentalism and avant-gardism of the New Bauhaus, the objective documentation associated with the *Neue Sachlichkeit* (New Objectivity or New Vision), and his teacher Harry Callahan's approach to photography as a personal medium to understand and reveal the relationship of art to life. Ishimoto's images presented new and dynamic expressions to his Japanese audience. At the time, the country's cultural elite were struggling to define Japan's own “modernity” in the post-occupation era. Ishimoto, with his “absent-mindedness”<sup>39</sup> regarding Japan's past and the highly politicized notion of tradition at the time, visited (and photographed) the buildings and gardens of the seventeenth-century Katsura Imperial Villa (Katsura

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<sup>38</sup> Minor White, “Photographs by Yasuhiro Ishimoto,” in *Photographs by Yasuhiro Ishimoto*, exh. brochure (Chicago: The Art Institute of Chicago, 1960).

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

Rikyū) in Kyoto. There he compared the geometry of the villa's New Palace to the gridlike composition of Piet Mondrian's paintings and the organic arrangement of the villa's stepping-stones to Hans Arp's collages and sculptures. (In fact, he fiercely disagreed with Minor White's characterization, for at the time Ishimoto emphasized his New Bauhaus heritage over his Japanese heritage.) Soon his photographs drew critical attention from the prominent architect Tange Kenzō (1911–2005), who found that they resonated with his own photographic vision. Tange saw Katsura as a synthesis of tradition and modernity and had been examining and photographing such examples of Japanese premodern architecture in his pursuit of developing and contextualizing his postwar architectural designs. As an avid photographer, Tange was well aware of the magic that photography could render; it could focus on details, deconstruct and fragment an architectural structure, and, through selection, cropping, and arrangement, could present a specific image of a building. He found Ishimoto's photography the perfect means to illustrate his discussion of Katsura in relation to his postwar designs.

The landmark book that resulted from Ishimoto's collaboration with Tange, *Katsura: Tradition and Creation in Japanese Architecture* (*Katsura: Nihon ni okeru dentō to sōsaku*) (Figure 1.2), is an outstanding example of the nuanced and complex relationship between photography and architecture. Published in 1960, this photographic publication presents a particularly fascinating case against the backdrop of the highly political environment of 1950s Japan. The book offered an entirely new and different approach to viewing the Katsura Imperial Villa, a property of the imperial family. Two hundred pages long, it features approximately 150 black-and-white photographs, selected from among about 300 shots that Ishimoto had taken and developed of Katsura in 1953 and 1954. These images are accompanied by an essay by Tange and an introduction by the German Bauhaus architect Walter

Gropius. Whereas the original layout of the photographs was prepared by Tange with the assistance of the Japanese graphic designer Kamekura Yūsaku (1915–1997), the cover and other design aspects of the publication were recommended by the acclaimed Bauhaus designer Herbert Bayer (1900–1985), who also commented on Tange’s layout. Published by Yale University Press in the United States and by Zōkeisha in Japan, this book enjoyed international acclaim and was reprinted at least seven times in the United States. Due to the book’s success, Ishimoto’s images of Katsura gained wide circulation in the United States, Japan, and Europe. However, this success came, to some extent, at the expense of the young photographer’s full artistic vision.

This chapter has a twofold objective. First, it reveals the original vision of Katsura that Ishimoto created by presenting his original prints. These images are displayed as Ishimoto originally intended them, free of Tange’s manipulations, such as sizing, cropping, and sequencing. Some of them were not even included in the 1960 book. Second, it examines the collaboration between Tange and Ishimoto, which resulted in *Katsura* as the architect’s visual manifesto, rather than the photographer’s. Although the two shared a photographic vision—which made the collaboration possible—their motivations to create a publication on Katsura differed vastly. Ishimoto, who had simply wanted to publish his first photo book, invited Tange to contribute an essay. Yet Tange then took the liberty of shifting his involvement from that of a mere essayist to a general editor and photo editor. In this capacity, with his modernist bias, he quickly recontextualized Ishimoto’s vision of Katsura to fit his own architectural discourse, injecting the modernist photographs into Japan’s “tradition debate” (*dentō ronsō*) of the mid-1950s. In doing so, Tange put Ishimoto’s photographs—which were once characterized as being “free of ideology”<sup>40</sup> or

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<sup>40</sup> Okamoto Tarō and Ishimoto Yasuhiro, “Shashin taidan: Okamoto Tarō/Ishimoto Yasuhiro” (A dialogue about photography by Okamoto Tarō and Ishimoto Yasuhiro), *Camera* (July 1956): 185–88. Artist Okamoto Tarō, who had studied ethnology under

“absentminded”<sup>41</sup>—in the service of his own agenda. However, until now little study has been made to uncover the exact nature of their collaboration and the involvement of others, such as Bayer and Gropius, in creating the extraordinary publication.

### **Katsura Imperial Villa: Photography and the Pursuit to Define Modernity**

The Katsura Imperial Villa (Figure 1.3) is among the most frequently debated examples of Japanese premodern architecture. Constructed in the mid-seventeenth century along the Katsura River in the southwest part of Kyoto, the villa comprises a complex of aristocratic dwellings (including the Old Shoin, Middle Shoin, and New Palace) built in the *shoin* residential style developed in the Momoyama period (1568–1603), four tea-ceremony houses (Shōkintei, Shōkatei, Shōiken, and Gepparō) in the *sukiya* style (a tearoom design of the same period), and one Buddhist hall, Onrindō, on exquisitely gardened grounds. Katsura was designed and constructed over the course of fifty years by Prince Toshihito (1579–1629) and Prince Toshitada (1619–1662), a father and son of the imperial Hachijō-no-miya family, and is believed to have been completed by 1663. Though the designer of the architecture is unknown, it has been suggested that numerous figures, particularly the tea-master Kobori Enshū (1579–1647), had been consulted in the design process.

Built over an extended period, the architecture reflects a wide variety of styles and construction techniques. According to the architect Isozaki Arata (b. 1931), whose

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Marcel Mauss at Sorbonne, attended the Collège de Sociologie Sacré organized by George Bataille, and returned to Japan in 1940, was vocal about his avant-garde interpretation of “tradition” (stating “we make ‘tradition’ in contemporary life”) and was influential in Japan’s artistic world. In the dialogue, Okamoto argued that one of the characteristics of Ishimoto’s photography, at least to the Japanese audience at that time, was the seeming absence of “ideology or preconceived notions” (*gainenteki na mono*), which manifested in his matter-of-fact (*sokubutsuteki na*) photographic expressions. This style shared similarities with the aesthetics of the *Neue Sachlichkeit* (New Objectivity) style.

<sup>41</sup> White, “Photographs by Yasuhiro Ishimoto.”



work is discussed in Chapters 3 and 4, and who has written extensively on Katsura, this diversity is in part informed by a massive stylistic shift in Japanese building history that took place during the Kan'ei era (1624–43), which overlapped with the initial stages of Katsura's development.<sup>42</sup> Isozaki observes that Katsura shows a complicated depth and layering of styles in time and space, and that, as a result, the whole structure, including its garden, is “an assemblage” of various design styles, “an all-inclusive complex of mixed methods.”<sup>43</sup> While the architecture represents the force of Japanese tradition from the seventeenth century, it also shows ways in which Japanese cultural and architectural practices were created and transformed through negotiations, compromises, appropriations, and mergers that transpired over years.

Many other distinguished twentieth-century architects, including Bruno Taut (1880–1938), Horiguchi Sutemi (1895–1984), Walter Gropius (1883–1969), and Mori Osamu (1905–1988), have analyzed and reevaluated Katsura's architecture, often in relation to their own design directions and strategies. Seeing Katsura as “a text rich in ambiguity, where architectural languages of quite different formal and temporal inspiration are juxtaposed,” Isozaki contends that “these layers of approach and language have made Katsura an object of incessant new reading strategies.”<sup>44</sup>

Katsura has been not only the subject of critical textual discourse but also of photographic representation. Indeed, Katsura's long history as a photographic subject demonstrates Japan's ongoing attempts to define modernity. The fact that images of this imperial property with extremely limited public access were mass-produced and widely circulated was a sign of the modern consciousness of the state. Early depictions

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<sup>42</sup> Arata Isozaki, *Japan-ness in Architecture*, trans. Sabu Kohso (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2006), 249.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, 249.

of the villa, often in the hazy Pictorialist tradition, stand in dramatic contrast to Ishimoto's avant-garde depiction of the same architecture.

The first photographs of Katsura (Figure 1.4) were made in 1872, when Yokoyama Matsusaburō (1838–1884) photographed it and made a series of albumen prints and stereocards as part of the Jinshin survey, the first survey in modern Japan to systematically examine and photograph its significant cultural property, initiated by the new Meiji government.<sup>45</sup> The early twentieth century brought a number of commercial publishing endeavors dealing with Katsura, which made the villa accessible to the public through photography. In 1926, ten photographs of the villa taken by Ōtsuka Minoru were included in a special two-volume portfolio *Treasure on One's Side (Zauhō)*, published as *fukyūban*, or a reasonably priced edition on Japanese art and architecture. These images often portray Katsura in the Pictorialist tradition as a static, nostalgic monument of the past.

An empirical approach to Katsura was undertaken by historian Kawakami Kunimoto (1883–death date unknown), who visited the villa several times between 1928 and 1932 to take measurements and to photograph the site. His findings were published in 1932 in the two-volume book *Photography and Surveyed Map of the Katsura Imperial Villa (Katsura rikyū oshashin oyobi jissokuzu)*, whose many drawings and several hundred photographs of the architecture and gardens make it one of the most comprehensive visual studies of Katsura to date. Not long after, in 1934,

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<sup>45</sup> Anne Wilkes Tucker, et al., *The History of Japanese Photography*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, in association with the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, 2003), 369. Several examples of stereocards of Katsura created for the survey can be found at the digital image library of the Tokyo National Museum Web Archives. See <http://www.ndl.go.jp/scenery/kansai/e/data/117/index.htm>. For a detailed discussion on the Jinshin survey and photography, see Okatsuka Akiko, *Utsusareta kokuhō: Nihon ni okeru bunkazai shashin no keifu* (Image and essence: A genealogy of Japanese photographers' views of national treasures) (Tokyo: Tokyo Metropolitan Museum of Photography, 2000).

Bruno Taut published another book on Katsura, *Gedanken uber Katsura*, which consists of his own twenty-seven drawings and proselike short texts titled “Gedanken nach dem Besuch in Katsura, Kioto, Mai 1934” (Thoughts on a visit in Katsura, Kyoto, May 1934).<sup>46</sup> While his impression of Katsura, epitomized by the statement “Katsura is eternal,” inspired several other architects to later produce their own books on Katsura’s architecture, some architects, such as Kishida Hideto and later his student Tange, resisted such aestheticization of Katsura and pursued their own investigations.

In 1929, Kishida had published the important photographic book *Structures of the Past (Kako no kōsei)*, which consists of texts and snapshots of premodern architecture, including the temples Hōryūji, Yakushiji, and Tōdaiji, as well as Katsura, focusing on the details of the structures and their ornaments, materials, and artifacts. Kishida himself took many of the photographs, and these images would later influence Tange.<sup>47</sup>

The 1950s marked a publishing boom for books on Katsura, at a time when the notion of tradition was reinvented in reaction to the Allied Forces’ occupation of Japan. Among the many titles produced, architect Mori Osamu’s *The Study of the Katsura Imperial Villa (Katsura Rikyū no kenkyū)* (1955) is outstanding for its extensive scholarly research on the history, cultural background, and architectural and garden

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<sup>46</sup> *Gedanken uber Katsura* was originally produced as a publication resembling an architect’s sketchbook, a fact emphasized in the title of the Japanese edition, which was reissued several times: *Gachō Katsura Rikyū*. *Gachō* means “sketchbook.”

<sup>47</sup> Kishida Hideto, *Kako no kōsei* (Structures of the past) (Tokyo: Kōseisha Shobō, 1929). Kishida followed this photo book with another, *Gendai no kōsei* (Structures of the present) (Tokyo: Kōseisha Shobō, 1930), in which he highlights the beauty and modernism of anonymous industrial structures. Kishida also created the photography book *Kyōto gosho* (Kyoto Imperial Palace) (1954), which includes sixty-six pages of his photographs of the palace.

designs of Katsura—research that took him more than twenty years to amass.<sup>48</sup> The architect Horiguchi Sutemi worked with photographer Satō Tatsuzō in the book *Katsura Imperial Villa (Katsura Rikyū)* (1953), to examine the design of Katsura and to speculate on its patron and designer.<sup>49</sup> Horticulturist Niwa Teizō studied Katsura's stepping-stones and stone lanterns in *Garden Lanterns of Katsura (Katsura Rikyū no niwadōrō)* (1952) and *Stepping-stones of Katsura (Katsura Rikyū no tobiishi)* (1955). These books are worth noting for their unique empirical and photographic approach to locating every stepping stone and lantern at Katsura. But none of these photographs revealed Katsura in such a visually avant-garde manner as those of Ishimoto. In most cases, the photographs, often anonymous, were merely used as illustrations to support the authors' standpoints.

An exception was *Form and Space in Japanese Architecture*, a visually remarkable 1955 publication by the American architect Norman F. Carver, Jr. Trained in architecture by Vincent Scully at Yale University, he shot Katsura and other sites while in Japan on a Fulbright scholarship between 1953 and 1955. Equipped with a medium-format Hasselblad camera, Carver approached Kyoto as a photographic site more freely and flexibly than Ishimoto, who used a large-format camera. Carver's images resonated with those of Ishimoto, and the two shared similar visions in their portrayal of the premodern buildings, particularly Katsura's Shokintei tearoom. Both employed a photographic frame to capture the architecture's geometric body, while omitting the thatched roof.<sup>50</sup> Recognizing this similarity, Ishimoto recalls that he

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<sup>48</sup> Mori Osamu, *Katsura Rikyū no kenkyū* (The study of the Katsura Imperial Villa) (Tokyo: Tōto Bunka Shuppan, 1955). In 1951, Mori also published *Katsura Rikyū* from Sōgensha, with a new edition issued in 1956.

<sup>49</sup> Horiguchi Sutemi, *Katsura Rikyū* (Tokyo: Mainichi Shinbun, 1953).

<sup>50</sup> Ishimoto Yasuhiro, interview by author, Tokyo, 20 November 2007. In researching Ishimoto's *Katsura*, I conducted a series of interviews with Ishimoto between November 2007 and September 2009. Although the most recent published interview of Ishimoto by Naitō Hiroshi in *Inax Report*, no. 176 (October 2008), is of substantial

discussed with Carver his way of seeing Katsura, but noted that Carver's photographs of Katsura were published first. Carver also acknowledges that there was a quiet rivalry between the two.<sup>51</sup>

Yet aside from Carver's images, Ishimoto's photographs of Katsura, when compared with the previous photographic expressions, undeniably demonstrate his originality and avant-gardism. It is thus imperative to trace his art back to his education at the New Bauhaus in order to fully understand Ishimoto's Katsura.

### **Ishimoto's Ways of Seeing: An Education in Chicago**

In 1948, at the age of twenty-seven, Ishimoto enrolled at the Institute of Design (ID) of the Illinois Institute of Technology (IIT), where he received comprehensive training in photography and basic design, eventually earning a B.S. in photography.<sup>52</sup> Under the directorship of the Hungarian émigré László Moholy-Nagy (1895–1946), the mission of the ID faculty was to apply the principles of the German Bauhaus, modified for an American context, to the training of “universal designers” who would unite art, industry, and technology. Ishimoto gained further exposure to the Bauhaus and ID philosophy of experimental vision through the books *Vision in Motion* (194?)

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length, I have not referred to it due to what I consider to be an extensive editing of the photographer's words.

<sup>51</sup> Norman Carver, telephone interview with author, Houston, Texas, 24 October 2009.

<sup>52</sup> The Institute of Design was founded as the Chicago School of Design in 1937 by László Moholy-Nagy, who taught at the Bauhaus between 1923 and 1928. The school later became the Institute of Design, and in 1949, it merged with the Illinois Institute of Technology. See Lloyd C. Engelbrecht, “Educating the Eye: Photography and the Founding Generation at the Institute of Design, 1937–46,” and Keith David, “‘To Open an Individual Way’: Photography at the Institute of Design, 1946–61,” in *Taken by Design: Photographs from the Institute of Design, 1937–1971* (Chicago: The Art Institute of Chicago, in association with the University of Chicago Press, 2002), 16–33, and 68–91, respectively.

by Moholy-Nagy and *Language of Vision* (1944) by György Kepes (1906–2001), which served as his theoretical foundation.<sup>53</sup>

During Ishimoto's studies at the Institute between 1948 and 1952, his teachers included Harry Callahan (1912–1999) and Aaron Siskind (1903–1991). Callahan, as a newly appointed chair of the photography department, redirected the Institute's photography program, shifting its focus from German Bauhaus experimentalism toward a more personal and subjective way of photographic seeing.<sup>54</sup> As one of his early students, Ishimoto directly benefited from the shift, which broadened his vision. Ultimately, he not only acquired traditional Bauhaus photographic and design skills (Figures 1.5 and 1.6), but also learned from Callahan's personal, intuitive, abstract perspectives and Siskind's documentary photography, as seen in Ishimoto's series on African American children photographed on the south side of Chicago (Figure 1.7). Various assignments given as part of the Institute's required basic curriculum and its photography foundation course (such as producing a negative that was 90% sky)(Figure 1.8) shaped and nurtured Ishimoto's conceptual, visual, and technical skills. Callahan was undeniably a major influence on Ishimoto, although the Japanese photographer recalls having seen only three photographs by Callahan while a student.<sup>55</sup> He taught the young student the act of photographing and the importance of having the "willingness simply to let things happen, and a sheer persistence and commitments" so that he could "transform his initial impetus into something that was

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<sup>53</sup> For discussions of the impact of Moholy-Nagy's writing and philosophy on Ishimoto, see Colin Westerbeck, "The Ten Foot Square Hut," in *Yasuhiro Ishimoto: A Tale of Two Cities* (Chicago: the Art Institute of Chicago, 1999), 35–57.

<sup>54</sup> Charles Traub, "Photography Education Comes of Age," in *The New Vision: Forty Years of Photography at the Institute of Design*, ed. Charles Traub (New York: Aperture, 1982), 35–46.

<sup>55</sup> Ishimoto, interview with author, Tokyo, 20 November 2007.

highly innovative.”<sup>56</sup> One of Ishimoto’s early photographs, a delicate black-and-white image of snow-covered steps (Figure 1.9), responds to Callahan’s *Weeds in Snow, Detroit* (1943)(Figure 1.10). Whereas Callahan captured delicate, minute weeds that appear like dark lines against the white snow, Ishimoto, who was well aware of his teacher’s image, captured white snow on dark steps. Both images compress three-dimensionality into a highly controlled two-dimensional black-and-white realm, creating a visual effect of positives and negatives.

As an undergraduate student at the ID, Ishimoto twice won the prestigious Moholy-Nagy Award, given to the best photography student at the Institute, and was also recognized in 1950 for his photographs of children (Figure 1.11) in the *Life* magazine Young Photographers contest, which was extremely popular among emerging talents in photography. (Robert Frank entered a year later.) As soon as Ishimoto graduated, Callahan introduced Ishimoto as one of his best students to Edward Steichen (1879–1973), curator and director of the department of photography at the Museum of Modern Art, New York (MOMA). Shortly thereafter, Steichen included Ishimoto in a group exhibition of twenty-five emerging photographers, *Always as the Young Strangers*, in 1953.<sup>57</sup> Though he was fresh out of school, Ishimoto’s career as a photographer seemed relatively secure, but he was firmly determined to return to Japan, where his farming family resided.<sup>58</sup>

Trusting the young photographer’s eyes, Steichen gave Ishimoto two missions upon his return to Japan: first, to find additional Japanese photographers for his

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<sup>56</sup> Sarah Greenough, “Art of Seeing,” in *Harry Callahan: Photographs by Harry Callahan* (Washington, D.C.: National Gallery of Art, 1997), 38.

<sup>57</sup> This exhibition was dedicated to the seventy-fifth birthday of writer and poet Carl Sandburg (1878–1967). See Jacob Deschin, “‘The Young Strangers’ Museum Exhibit of Prints Chosen by Steichen,” *New York Times*, 1 March 1953, X14.

<sup>58</sup> Marvin E. Newman (b. 1927), Ishimoto’s best friend from the ID, recalls that Ishimoto, as the eldest of three children, felt that he should return to Japan. Marvin E. Newman, telephone interview with author, New York City, 13 February 2009.

upcoming exhibition *The Family of Man* (1955), which would feature two of Ishimoto's photographs (Figure 1.12) and would later travel to Japan<sup>59</sup>; and second, to assist Arthur Drexler (1925–1987), MOMA's curator of architecture and design, who was scheduled to arrive in Tokyo for exhibition research days after Ishimoto's arrival.

Ishimoto's U.S. contacts included not only photographers but also architects who were important in midcentury Chicago, including Ludwig Mies van der Rohe (1886–1969), Buckminster Fuller (1895–1983), and Konrad Wachsmann (1901–1980), each of whom saw the city and its design institutions as test sites for new design ideas and methodologies. During Ishimoto's time in Chicago, Mies chaired the architecture program at the IIT, while Wachsmann taught at the ID.<sup>60</sup> Often given special assignments, such as photographing a thesis exhibition, Ishimoto, as a student, had once photographed Mies (Figure 1.13) and was acquainted with Wachsmann. These encounters evince the interdisciplinary nature of education at the ID and the close relationships cultivated between the student body and the faculty.

During his junior year, about 1951, Ishimoto had been assigned a project that involved learning to rotate the lens in a large-format view camera (a technique known as “a tilt and swing”). Ishimoto chose to photograph Mies's nearly completed Lake Shore Drive Apartments (1948–51)(Figure 1.14) in Chicago, emphasizing its geometric structure. This assignment was the only time he photographed architecture while a student, yet the photographs he took of Mies's apartment complex would have

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<sup>59</sup> In Japan, the exhibition was titled *Warera ningen kazoku* (We, the human family) and traveled to various cities including Tokyo, Osaka, and Nagoya beginning in March 1956. The exhibition of a highly imaginative installation of photographs in various sizes was designed by Kamiya Kōji and Tange Kenzō. Both Tange and Ishimoto were part of *The Family of Man* Japan committee.

<sup>60</sup> Wachsmann was well known in Japan for his space-frame designs. In Japan in 1955, he conducted an influential twenty-one-day seminar series for young Japanese architects, in which he discussed these designs. See “Wakkusuman semina” (Wachsmann's seminars), *Shinkenchiku* (New architecture) 31 (February 1956): 57.



a significant and lingering impact on the young photographer and would influence the way he later visualized Katsura.

### **Ishimoto's Vision of Katsura**

On March 19, 1953, Ishimoto returned to Japan after fourteen years in the United States. Following the directive of Steichen, Ishimoto accompanied Arthur Drexler in his research. (Steichen himself would later make his first visit in Japan—and Katsura—in 1956 when *The Family of Man* traveled to several locations in Japan (Figure 1.15)). Together with the Japanese architect Yoshimura Junzō (1908–1997), who taught at the Tokyo College of Art, they traveled to Kyoto, Shiga, and Nara in search of models on which to base the construction of a Japanese structure to be featured in the exhibition *House in the Garden* in MOMA's Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Sculpture Garden beginning in late 1954.<sup>61</sup> Their itinerary included stops at various temples, shrines, gardens, and *minka* houses of premodern vernacular design in Japan's ancient capitals, including the Kamigamo Shrine, Kyōto Imperial Palace, Shūgakuin Villa, the temple Onjōji (also known as Miidera), and Katsura.<sup>62</sup> At the time, Katsura was still closed to the general public, its management having been transferred to the Imperial Household Agency after World War II. Special permission

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<sup>61</sup> Mr. and Mrs. John D. Rockefeller also participated in this trip. The group also met with prominent figures in Japanese politics, business, and art to negotiate the financing and logistics of the garden exhibition. The details of this exhibition and Drexler's trip to Japan are documented in an unsigned article, "A House of Old Japan in the Heart of Manhattan," *The America-Japan Society Bulletin* 3, no. 2 (July–August 1954): 16–20.

<sup>62</sup> Drexler was most drawn to the simply designed Guest Hall (*kyakuden*) of two subtemples of the great Tendai monastery, Onjōji. Located in Ōtsu, a suburb of Kyoto, the temple was built in the seventeenth century in the *shoin* style. This tour later produced the *shoin*-style Shōfūsō at MOMA. Ishimoto contributed many photographs to Drexler's publication, *The Architecture of Japan* (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1955). Ishimoto had photographed what Drexler requested, but in his own way.

and an appointment were required to visit the villa, with priority often given to distinguished personnel from abroad.

Among the architectural sites he viewed on that trip, the Katsura Imperial Villa made the deepest impact on Ishimoto. He was particularly taken with its garden and numerous stepping-stones. There, using his large-format 4 x 5 German Linhof camera, he became absorbed in photographing the organically shaped and arranged stepping-stones surrounded by moss found throughout Katsura's garden. He was also struck by the post-and-beam structure of the villa's New Palace (*Shin goten*) architecture (Figure 1.16), pronouncing, "Katsura is Mondrianesque!" He later recalled:

When I visited Katsura for the first time last year, I found its garden's stepping stones particularly interesting... Of course the stones are natural, but the selection and combination of their forms, colors and textures were impressive. What I found most amazing, after making one round of these combinations, is that these are not simply passages, they played a role in adjusting hues by form, size (i.e., large and small), and color, meaning that the placement of the stones is carefully thought out, in a sense [to accommodate] the angle for a certain way of walking, to psychologically guide people to other parts of the garden or the next building, or to create an atmosphere.<sup>63</sup>

The critic Hamaguchi Ryūichi (1916–1995), who had met Ishimoto in Chicago in the fall of 1952 and the following year had introduced the photographer to Tange, his classmate at the Tokyo Imperial University, saw Ishimoto's photographs of the stepping-stones the 1954 exhibition *Today's Focus: From the History of Japanese Art*

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<sup>63</sup> Hamaguchi Ryūichi, "Katsura Rikyū no niwaishi to kameraman Ishimoto: Kindai Bijutsukan *Gendai no me ten yori*" (The garden stones of the Katsura Imperial Palace and photographer Ishimoto: From the exhibition *Today's Focus* at the National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo), *Mizue* 593 (February 1955): 61.

*/Gendai no me: Nihon bijutsushi kara* at the National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo.

Finding these images unusually intriguing and powerful, Hamaguchi thought that Ishimoto had cropped them to reveal the sculptural aspect of the stone, its solidity and texture, and above all the essence of stone as design.<sup>64</sup> These images by Ishimoto demonstrate characteristics of the post-World War I artistic movement *Neue Sachlichkeit*, which emphasized an artist's rigorous and close observation and brought a sharply focused, documentary quality to the art of photography. What Hamaguchi did not know is that Ishimoto, thanks to his intensive modernist training at the ID, did *not* crop the photographs to achieve this effect; rather, he framed them tightly in his viewfinder as he photographed the stones. Ishimoto's unconventional images of Katsura demonstrate his highly original photographic way of seeing, informed by his curiosity and his grasp of formalism, experimentalism, and objectivity, toward the stones and structures that he saw with excitement for the first time.

This revelation of Katsura as a modern subject led Ishimoto to return to Katsura in May 1954, about a year later. This time, he spent one month there, with the self-imposed mission to photograph the entirety of the villa. As a U.S. citizen (he did not become a naturalized Japanese citizen until 1969), he was able to gain permission without difficulty from the Imperial Household Agency to access and photograph the site for one month. Staying at the famed inn Tawaraya (the astronomically high bill for which would later infuriate his father), Ishimoto made daily visits to Katsura with his Linhof camera, four lenses (90 mm, 120 mm, 150 mm, and 210 mm), and a handheld flash, shooting approximately six hundred frames in total. The flash was necessary for illuminating the dim interiors of the villa's pavilions, and consistent lighting was often difficult to achieve. Unfortunately, half of the film was ruined in developing by a local, inexperienced camera shop. Ishimoto had the rest of the film developed after he

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<sup>64</sup> Ibid.

returned to Tokyo. Soon after, these images, showing the entirety of Katsura, would awe critic Hamaguchi Ryūichi and architect Horiguchi Sutemi as well as Tange. This body of work would become a foundation of the 1960 publication *Katsura*.

### **Ishimoto and Tange: Two Wartime Experiences**

Ishimoto first met Tange shortly after the photographer's initial trip to Katsura in 1953 (Figure 1. 17). There were many similarities between Ishimoto and Tange. Both were trained in design; Ishimoto had briefly studied architecture at Northwestern University before enrolling at the ID, whereas Tange had enrolled in Nihon University's film department for two years before studying architecture at the Tokyo Imperial University. Both were passionate about photography. To different extents, both also had overseas experiences while growing up during the period of Japan's aggressive territorial expansion. However, their backgrounds varied considerably, as did their vastly different wartime experiences—which likely affected their later, disparate notions of “tradition.”

Born in 1921 to Japanese immigrant farmers in San Francisco, Ishimoto spent his first three years there before his family returned to their home in Kōchi Prefecture on Japan's Shikoku Island.<sup>65</sup> In contrast, Tange was born in Osaka, Japan, in 1911, and his father, a successful banker, soon took his family to China, where he worked for just under a decade at the branch of a prestigious Japanese commercial bank, first in Hānkōu and later in Shanghai.<sup>66</sup> Both families were part of Japan's growing migrant population: whereas the Tanges were privileged business expatriates, the Ishimotos

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<sup>65</sup> Nagano Shigeichi and Ōshima Hiroshi, “Ishimoto Yasuhiro rongu intabyū: Tanjō kara genzai made” (A long interview with Ishimoto Yasuhiro: From birth to the present), in *Shashin nenkan 2006* (Photography annual 2006), ed. Nippon Camera Mook (Tokyo: Nippon Camera, 2006), 178–208.

<sup>66</sup> Tange Kenzō, *Tange Kenzō: Ippon no enpitsu kara* (Tange Kenzō: From one pencil) (Tokyo: Nihon Tosho Sentā, 1997), 9–11.

were economic refugees seeking better opportunities. Both returned to Japan in the early 1920s.

Unlike Tange, who had gone to an elite high school in Hiroshima and had eventually entered the nation's top architecture program in the engineering department of the prestigious Imperial University of Tokyo, Ishimoto completed his high school education at a local agricultural school and then chose to return to the United States alone, encouraged by his progressive-minded mother to leave Japan at the beginning of the nation's war years. She believed that he would be better off abroad when the war began and wanted him to further his education in California, taking advantage of his U.S. citizenship. In 1939, Ishimoto arrived in California, where he worked first as a farmhand for a family from Kōchi in Hayward while attending a nearby junior college. He then enrolled at the University of California, Berkeley, where he studied agriculture. At the farm, a friend named Mr. Kubota taught Ishimoto how to develop photographic film. Soon after, following the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, Ishimoto and thousands of others of Japanese descent were sent to internment camps, in the summer of 1942, under Executive Order 9066. Ishimoto's eventual destination was at the Granada Relocation Center (also known as Camp Amache) in southern Colorado. He spent almost three years there, working as a fireman and learning silk-screening skills. Ishimoto's first substantial encounter with photography also occurred in the internment camp (Figure 1.18). A fellow internee, George Inoue, taught him photography skills, from setting exposure times to developing film and enlarging prints. Ishimoto also met another photographer-internee, Toshi Matsumoto, who would later move to New York and work for such popular magazines as *Harper's Bazaar* and *Vogue*. However, Ishimoto had to wait until Japan lost the Battle of Midway in June 1942 to have his own camera shipped to the camp. While in the Bay Area, he had purchased his first

camera, a Kodak 35 mm, but had left it behind with his employer when he was sent to the internment camp.<sup>67</sup>

Ishimoto was released from the camp in early 1945, after the U.S. Supreme Court, in *Ex parte Mitsuye Endo*, 323 U.S. 283 (1944), held that the United States could not continue to detain a citizen whom the government conceded was loyal to the country. Given two hundred dollars as compensation, he chose to go to Chicago because he was not allowed to move to any coastal city due to his classification as a “returning second-generation Japanese” (*kibei nisei*). Ishimoto saw the defeat of Japan and the end of the war as a silk-screen artist working in the Windy City.

A more drastic reversal of fortune awaited Tange at the end of the war. He had led a seemingly privileged life as a young architect, working in the office of architect Maekawa Kunio (1905–1986) and later enrolling in the Tokyo Imperial University’s graduate school in 1941. In August 1945, he saw the almost simultaneous deaths of his parents in Imabari, a city on the northern tip of Shikoku Island facing Hiroshima across the Inland Sea. His father died from illness, and his mother was killed only a few days later by a firebomb. Tange was only an evening away from Hiroshima, riding in a westbound train from Tokyo, when he heard about the dropping of the atomic bomb on Hiroshima. When he reached Imabari, he saw a nearly decimated city and learned of his parents’ deaths.<sup>68</sup>

As different as Ishimoto’s and Tange’s experiences after the collapse of Japan’s imperialist, fascist government may have been, these experiences prompted each of them to construct a new visual image of postwar Japan through design and photography, although their manners, methodologies, and attitudes would vary. Ishimoto, who had once desired to return to Japan as an architect, was now determined

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<sup>67</sup> Nagano and Ōshima, “Ishimoto Yasuhiro rongu intabyū,” in *Shashin nenkan 2006*, 181–82.

<sup>68</sup> Tange, *Tange Kenzō: Ippon no enpitsu kara*, 9–11.

to become a photographer. This desire stemmed from a magazine article he had read at a Japanese grocery store in Chicago about the fortieth prime minister of Japan, Tōjō Hideki (1884–1948), a former general in the Japanese imperial army. The article speculated on the fate of the war criminal and argued that photography could play an important role in how he is portrayed. Ishimoto was thus inspired to photographically capture Japan in a way that would be pertinent in a postwar setting. However, his plan was devoid of any particular ideological or political intent.<sup>69</sup>

During the war, Tange's romantic inclination toward the war was evidenced by his enjoyment of Japanese Romantic literature (*Nihon Rōman-ha*), in particular the literature of Yasuda Yojūrō (1910–1981), and his winning design entries for the Memorial to the Creation of the Greater East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere (1942) and the Japan-Thailand Friendship Hall (1943) in Bangkok. The designs incorporated the essence of Japanese vernacular designs, such as Ise Shrine and Kyoto Imperial Palace, using modern technologies and materials such as reinforced concrete.<sup>70</sup> In these unbuilt designs, Tange attempted to create an architecture that departed from the nationalistic and eclectic *teikan-heigō* (Imperial Crown) style—which combined a Japanese-style castle-like rooftop on a Western-style geometrical structure—and from the Western, modernist white box.<sup>71</sup> As an admirer of Le Corbusier, Tange wanted to incorporate meaningful expressions of premodern Japanese architecture into his own

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<sup>69</sup> Ishimoto, interview by author, Tokyo, 20 May 2008.

<sup>70</sup> Isozaki Arata discusses in depth the relationship between Tange's winning design entries and his attitude toward Japan's *tennō* system and his pursuit of "Japan-ness" in architecture in *Japan-ness in Architecture*, 14–21.

<sup>71</sup> Isozaki Arata discussed in depth the development of *teikan-heigō-shiki* (crown-topped style) citing the architect Shimoda Kikutarō (1866–1931) as an early advocate of the style, considering the style as "a unification of rational structure and traditional symbol, thus affording an emblem simple enough to be widely appreciated." *Japan-ness in Architecture*, 8. One existing example of a building in that style is the main gallery of the Tokyo National Museum, which was designed by the architect Watanabe Jun (1932–1938).

modernist designs.<sup>72</sup> After the war, he jettisoned his nationalistic past and began to design and reconstruct war-devastated cities such as Imabari, Hiroshima, and Otaru, soon winning the 1950 competition to create the Atomic Bomb Memorial Park in Hiroshima, including the Hiroshima Peace Center, the design of which was based in part on Katsura as well as on the eighth-century Shōsōin, the temple treasure house of Tōdaiji in Nara constructed in the *azekura* log-cabin style. In fact, his visual interpretation of Katsura would serve as a critical tool for Tange, in the political shift from the wartime to the postwar years, as a means of upholding his design strategy—as seen in his use of premodern architectural expressions in modern design—under the two opposing political regimes.

### **Ishimoto in the Cultural Milieu of Postwar Japan**

Upon his return to Japan in 1953, Ishimoto soon found himself in the midst of a vibrant, cultural postwar scene. His friendship with Tange flourished, despite their differences in age, achievement, status, and ideology, and Tange helped the newly returned photographer to launch his career. Ishimoto participated in the Committee on International Design (known as the “Japan Design Committee”), which Tange had founded in 1953 (Figure 1.19). The architect often invited Ishimoto to various social gatherings; he even served as a *nakōdo* (symbolic matchmaker) at Ishimoto’s marriage in 1956 to Kawamata Shigeru (1926–2006), an assistant to the legendary avant-garde flower-arrangement master Teshigahara Sōfū (1900–1979). Through this professional and social relationship, Tange in turn became well acquainted with Ishimoto and his photography.

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<sup>72</sup> Tange Kenzō, interview by Fujimori Terunobu, “Kompe no jidai” (Era of design competitions), *Kenchiku zasshi/Journal of Architecture and Building Science* 100, no. 1229 (January 1985): 23.



It is important to understand the context of artistic collectivism that flourished in postwar Japan and that supported Ishimoto's emergence in Japan's art world. After the end of the war, many Japanese artists, buoyed by their regained freedom of expression, gathered to discuss subjects such as technology, modern art, and an interdisciplinary approach to art as they searched for their own artistic identities. These discussions were also stimulated by information on modern art from Europe and North America disseminated through the print media and sometimes through exhibitions. During this time, a number of collectives emerged in the realm of visual arts, including Gutai Bijutsu Kyōkai (Gutai Art Association) in Osaka and the Tokyo-based Jikken Kōbō / Experimental Workshop, Gurafikku Shūdan (Graphic Artists' Collective), and Japan Design Committee. Although the degree and manner of collaboration differed from collective to collective, the 1950s were marked, as art historian Reiko Tomii suggests, by a shift toward a socialist and utopian collectivism of artists, changing the way many artists identified themselves.<sup>73</sup>

The mission of the Japan Design Committee, which consisted of a small number of ambitious industrial designers, architects, and an artist, was to select a project for the Milan Design Triennial, and the committee members gathered monthly to select the best design items made in Japan for commercial launch at the Matsuya Department Store in the Ginza shopping district of Tokyo. One of the goals of the committee was to elevate the status of craft to that of modern design, without losing the force of Japanese tradition. The group's meetings were often followed by an informal dinner and drinks, during which committee members introduced their own

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<sup>73</sup> Reiko Tomii, "After the 'Descent to the Everyday': Japanese Collectivism from Hi Red Center to the Play, 1964–1973," in *The Art of Social Imagination after 1945: Collectivism after Modernism*, 52–53.

projects, investigated the meaning of tradition in modern Japanese design, and passionately and candidly exchanged ideas.<sup>74</sup>

Tange and other committee members were eager to hear about Ishimoto's experience at the New Bauhaus and were awed by the intense formalism and high design qualities of his photographs.<sup>75</sup> Ishimoto's participation in the committee allowed him to develop a meaningful relationship with Japan's artistic leaders. The photographer Ōtsuji Kiyoji (1923–2001), an important member of Jikken Kōbō,<sup>76</sup> recalled the circumstances under which he met the photographer in 1954: "When I met Ishimoto at a coffee shop in Shinjuku . . . he brought with him a mountain of his own

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<sup>74</sup> Kokusai Dezain Komittī (International Design Committee) and Okamoto Tarō, "Me: Good design" (The eye: Good design), in *Aoyama jidai no Okamoto Tarō 1954–1970: Gendai Geijutsu Kenkyūjo kara Taiyō no tō made/Tarō Okamoto: The Contemporary Art Institute through Expo '70*, ed. Satō Reiko et al. (Kawasaki: Tarō Okamoto Museum of Art, 2007), 54 and 62, respectively. The latter was originally published in *Dokusho jin* (Reading people), 21 March 1956.

<sup>75</sup> The International Design Committee of Japan was organized after Japan had been invited to participate in the Milan Design Triennial in 1953 but was unable to accept due to the absence of an organization that could coordinate such an event in Japan. The founding members of the International Design Committee included architects Tange Kenzō, Seike Kiyoshi, Yoshizaka Takamasa, Sakakura Junzō, and Maekawa Kunio; designers Charlotte Perriand, Kenmochi Isamu, Watanabe Riki, and Kamekura Yūsaku; critics Katsumi Masaru, Takiguchi Shūzō, and Hamaguchi Ryūichi; and artist Okamoto Tarō. For more on the committee's activities, see Japan Design Committee's Web site, <http://designcommittee.jp/#/about> and interviews with Watanabe Chikara, Ishimoto Yasuhiro, Chō Taisaku, and Fujino Yoshitaka in "Kokusai Dezain Komittii no koro" (Around the time of the International Design Committee), in *Aoyama jidai no Okamoto Tarō 1954–1970: Gendai Geijutsu Kenkyūjo kara Taiyō no tō made/Tarō Okamoto: The Contemporary Art Institute through Expo '70*, 171–77.

<sup>76</sup> Jikken Kōbō/Experimental Workshop is an interdisciplinary collaborative that was organized by the Surrealist poet and art critic Takiguchi Shūzō in 1951 and lasted until 1957. Other than Ōtsuji, the group included pianist Sonoda Takahiro, composer Takemitsu Tōru, and an early multimedia artist who pioneered the use of technology, Yamaguchi Masahiro. The group's wide-ranging activities encompassed stage designs and exhibitions and reached a peak in 1953, coinciding with Ishimoto's return to Japan. For more on Experimental Workshop, see Miwako Tezuka, "Jikken Kōbō (Experimental Workshop): Avant-Garde Experiments in Japanese Art of the 1950s," Ph.D. diss., Columbia University, 2005.

photographs, all astonishingly accomplished. They were photographs of a great formal quality found in the street that I, too, had been trying to create. I felt very close to him in substance. . . . I received prewar design training from Yamawaki Iwao, who studied architecture at the Bauhaus, and I thought that Ishimoto and I were heading towards a similar direction through our Bauhaus connection.”<sup>77</sup> With Ōtsuji and the artist Tsuji Ayako, Ishimoto created a short experimental film *Cinecaligraph* (1955), named by Takiguchi Shūzō (1903–1979), an eminent Surrealist critic and poet and one of the leading figures in the Japan Design Committee. Inspired by a film-based experiment by Norman McLaren (1914–1987), which was introduced to the group by Ishimoto, they shot a 16 mm film of a cityscape and then painted, scratched, and poured an emulsion on it. The film, accompanied by a sound piece by Stravinsky, was shown at the second exhibition of Gurafikku Shūdan.<sup>78</sup>

The Japan Design Committee provided Ishimoto with a Japanese alternative to the interdisciplinary Institute of Design, and he certainly played a key role in Tokyo’s art world by injecting it with the Bauhaus aesthetic and synergy of collectivism. Yet Ishimoto ultimately chose instead to produce art on an individual basis. This decision was based in part on having observed, during his years in Chicago, the effects of McCarthyism and how socially progressive artistic collectivism was often the target of government censorship.<sup>79</sup> Arguably this was also the reason why Ishimoto often preferred to photograph nonpolitical subjects. Ultimately, what is critical in his images is not the subject matter, but the way in which they open up and speak to a viewer. His

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<sup>77</sup> Ōtsuji Kiyoji, interview by Okatsuka Akiko, “Interview with Ōtsuji Kiyoji,” in *Ishimoto Yasuhiro: Chicago, Tokyo* (Tokyo: Tokyo Metropolitan Museum of Photography, 1998), 156–57.

<sup>78</sup> *Ōtsuji Kiyoji no shashin: Deai to koraboreshon* (Photography of Ōtsuji Kiyoji: Encounters and collaborations) (Tokyo: Film Art-sha, 2007), 54–55.

<sup>79</sup> Ishimoto, interview by author, Tokyo, 15 September 2009.

tone may be neutral—or “absentminded”<sup>80</sup> or “ideology-free”<sup>81</sup>—but he had undeniably innovative methods of transforming the seemingly ordinary into the extraordinary.

Ishimoto soon received a fair amount of critical attention: not only did he publish his photographs in magazines and journals of art, photography, and architecture, but he also exhibited them and shared his educational methodologies through articles, guest lectures, and informal get-togethers.<sup>82</sup> In spring 1954, Takiguchi Shūzō, an eminent art critic, gave Ishimoto his first solo exhibition in Japan. A weeklong exhibition was held at Takemiya Gallery, located in the Kanda section of downtown Tokyo, which was at the time one of the centers of Japanese avant-garde art.<sup>83</sup> In this exhibition, Ishimoto presented some of the photographs he had shot in Chicago (such as his light experiments, images of African American children, and those of the legs of beachgoers at the boathouse at Chicago’s North Shore Lake Beach); he also showed a pair of bamboo sculptures and an installation involving a photograph and a suspended ashtray to reference a recent debacle in the Japanese parliament.<sup>84</sup> His interdisciplinary approach and social criticism were indicative of his training at the ID.

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<sup>80</sup> White, “Photographs by Yasuhiro Ishimoto.”

<sup>81</sup> “Shashin taidan: Okamoto Tarō to Ishimoto Yasuhiro” (A dialogue over photography by Okamoto Tarō and Ishimoto Yasuhiro), *Camera* (July 1956): 185–88.

<sup>82</sup> Ishimoto’s photographs were featured in such major magazines as *Asahi Guraifu* (December 1953), *Bijutsu techō* (April and May 1954), *Mizue* (February 1955), and *Ikebana Sōgetsu* (March 1954). In 1954, soon after his return to Japan, he began photographing various modern and pre-modern architectures for *Shinkenchiku*.

<sup>83</sup> In his exhibition series at Takemiya Gallery, Takiguchi endeavored to give emerging talents the opportunity for solo exhibitions, still rare at the time in Japan. See Ebizuka Kōichi, “Shuzo Takiguchi and the Takemiya Gallery,” trans. by Reiko Tomii, in *1953: Shedding Light on Art in Japan* (Tokyo: Tama Art University and Meguro Museum of Art, 1998), 59–66.

<sup>84</sup> Takiguchi Shūzō, “Ishimoto Yasuhiro no shigoto” (The Work of Ishimoto Yasuhiro), *Camera* (July 1956): 182–83.

At the same time, Ishimoto quickly became known in Japan's museum scene as a representative of the contemporary photographic trends of the United States. From 29 August to 4 October 1953, the National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo, presented its first photography project, *The Exhibition of Contemporary Photography: Japan and America / Gendai shashin-ten: Nihon to Amerika*, organized by three Japanese photography specialists, including Ina Nobuo (1898–1978), with Edward Steichen of the Museum of Modern Art, New York. Ishimoto was featured as one of thirty American photographers, and his works appeared alongside many of the master photographers championed by Steichen, such as Ansel Adams, Berenice Abbott, Walker Evans, and young John Szarkowski.<sup>85</sup> The canonical nature of the exhibition, the first to validate photography as an artistic medium at the newly established but influential national institution, helped to establish Ishimoto's status as an emerging photographer in Japan.

Ishimoto recalls that, with his reputation on rise, he was contacted by the Japanese publisher David-sha, which expressed an interest in publishing his photographs of Katsura. After completing his photography of Katsura in May 1954, Ishimoto was given a book contract with the publisher and discussed with its young editor, Kobayashi Hideo, whom they should ask to contribute an essay to accompany his photographs. In 1955, they selected Tange Kenzō because he represented the younger generation of architects and had expressed admiration for Ishimoto's "humanism and extraordinary ability to create forms."<sup>86</sup>

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<sup>85</sup> See *Gendai shashin-ten: Nihon to Amerika/The Exhibition of Contemporary Photography: Japan and America*, exh. cat. (Tokyo: The National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo, 1953). My discussion of the exhibition with Masuda Rei, curator of photography at the National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo, on 15 September 2009, was most helpful in understanding the exhibition's historical significance.

<sup>86</sup> Tange, a blurb in an announcement flier for Ishimoto's book *Aru hi aru tokoro/Someday Somewhere* (Tokyo: Geibi Shuppansha, 1958).

## Tange's Ways of Seeing

Tange's interest in photography predated his meeting with Ishimoto. His teenage interest in optics—as an aspiring astronomer, he had a telescope specially made for him<sup>87</sup>—was followed by his love of the camera and photography. As an adult, he often photographed his wife, and his daughter recalls posing for him frequently and sometimes for lengthy periods of time as a child.<sup>88</sup> While a student, Tange came to recognize the power of photography as an effective tool of representation in architecture. Tange's teacher at the Tokyo Imperial University's architecture program, Kishida Hideto, had photographed Japanese premodern architecture, particularly Kyoto Palace, for his publication *Structures of the Past*; his photographs helped inspire Tange to use photography in designing and analyzing architecture.<sup>89</sup> Later, with his Leica, Tange would photograph many of these same structures (Figure 1.20).

Tange's encounter with photographs of Le Corbusier's architecture in an architectural journal is another important episode in his biography. These photographs enabled him to appreciate the artistic and often cinematic spaces created by the Swiss architect, especially the Centrosoyuz Building.<sup>90</sup> According to architectural historian

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<sup>87</sup> Tange, *Tange Kenzō: Ippon no enpitsu kara*, 16–18.

<sup>88</sup> Uchida Michiko, interview by author, Tokyo, 20 January 2008.

<sup>89</sup> Subsequently, as a graduate student, he traveled to Ise, Izumo, Kyoto, Nara, and Kamakura to visit examples of premodern architecture. Tange Kenzō and Fujimori Terunobu, *Tange Kenzō* (Tokyo: Shinkenchikusha, 2002), 75. Also, Fujimori Terunobu, interview by author, Tokyo, 5 November 2007. Fujimori Terunobu is a professor of the history of architecture at the University of Tokyo's Institute of Industrial Science.

<sup>90</sup> Tange, interview by Fujimori, “Konpe no jidai (Era of design competitions),” 22. In Tange's first published essay in 1940, he expresses his admiration for the space created by Le Corbusier—specifically its cinematic and sculptural effects, as compared to spaces often found in functional modern architecture (such as Bauhaus architecture)—through an analogical comparison of work by Michelangelo to that by Filippo Brunelleschi. See Tange Kenzō, “Mikeranjero shyō: Rukorubyujie ron no jyosetsu to shite” (In praise of Michelangelo: An introduction to my thesis on Le Corbusier), *Gendai kenchiku* (Contemporary architecture) (January 1940): unpaginated.

Fujimori Terunobu, this discovery later led Tange to utilize his cinematic and photographic vision to create early schematic designs consisting of numerous images portraying different angles; not only are Tange's own architectural designs extremely photogenic, but Tange was always extremely conscientious about how his architecture looked in photographs.<sup>91</sup> The photographer Murai Osamu recalls the architect's uncanny ability to pinpoint the most photogenic shooting locations for his structures, such as the complex shell structure of his Yoyogi National Gymnasium (1961–64), conceding that Tange knew “where his architecture should be viewed from, and particularly about how it would look in the city.”<sup>92</sup>

Tange also had a profound interest in Katsura prior to meeting Ishimoto. Beginning in the early 1950s, he visited the gardens and structures of Kyoto and Nara to photograph them with his Leica.<sup>93</sup> As revealed in his recently discovered family albums, Katsura was among the sites he visited, along with such historic landmarks as the Daisen'in and Ryōanji gardens, as early as 1952.<sup>94</sup> The contact strip of images shot at Ryōanji (Figure 1.21) shows Tange's practice of constructing a focused image through trimming, indicated by a blue line. Another strip of images from Daisen'in (Figure 1.22) indicates his interest in including both the organic (stones) and the geometric (background wall) in one frame.

What captured Tange's photographic eye at Katsura was not its scenic views but its particular details—including its texture and materiality, the geometry of its

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<sup>91</sup> Fujimori Terunobu, interview by author, Tokyo, 5 November 2007.

<sup>92</sup> Murai Osamu, interview by Okatsuka Akiko, “Kenchiku shashin raireki” (My personal history with architectural photography: an interview with photographer Murai Osamu), in *Kenchiku no kioku/Remembrance of Places Past*, exh. cat. (Tokyo: Tokyo Metropolitan Foundation for History and Culture, Tokyo Metropolitan Teien Art Museum, 2008), 331.

Also, Murai Osamu, interview by author, Tokyo, 18 February 2008.

<sup>93</sup> Katō Toshiko, interview by author, Tokyo, 20 January 2008.

<sup>94</sup> These albums are in the collection of Uchida Michiko (Tange's daughter with Katō Toshiko) in Tokyo.

structure, and the interaction between man-made and natural elements—as demonstrated by seven contact strips, of three frames each, from 1952 taped to a single album page. Tange took these filmstrips out of sequence and arranged them to show the complexities of Katsura’s *shoin* buildings (Figure 1.23). Indeed, he created a certain narrative that starts with images of the facade of the New Palace, accentuated by the geometric patterns of *shōji* screens. As seen in the frames of the first row on the album page, Tange tended to omit the elegantly curved roofs of the architecture. Then, in the first three frames (left to right) of the second row, he shifted his focus to the Old Shoin and shot close and low to capture the texture of the cypress floor of the veranda adjacent to the Moon-viewing Platform. The following three frames on the same row focus on the grid forms of the Old Shoin with the Moon-viewing Platform. The second to fourth (left to right) frames in the third row were shot from the lawn that surrounds the *shoin* complexes. There, he looked at the contrast between the geometric structure of the Old Shoin and an organic garden space with a horizontal line of stepping-stones.<sup>95</sup> In this sequence, Tange assumes the role of an investigator, exploring the complex’s forms, its material details, and its relationship to the garden. Some of these images bear a striking similarity to Ishimoto’s Katsura images (Figures 1.24 and 25), and their arrangement anticipates how Tange would create a narrative for Katsura by specifically sequencing the images by Ishimoto.

Tange saw Ishimoto’s Katsura images in 1953 and 1954 and was invited to write for his *Katsura* book project by early 1955. In July of that year, he announced to his colleagues his intention of producing a collaborative book with Ishimoto. Tange

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<sup>95</sup> In the fifth and sixth frames of the third strip, a woman is seen seated on the veranda adjacent to the Moon-viewing Platform with a man in a suit photographing her. They are likely his wife Katō Toshiko and the Japanese-American artist Isamu Noguchi, whom the couple took around Kyoto. Tange frequently included Katō in his photographs, as her five-foot-tall figure served as a convenient scale within architectural settings. She was hence nicknamed “Madam Human Scale.”



then returned to Katsura in August 1955 to see (and photograph) the villa again (Figure 1.26). Many of Tange's shots from this trip, preserved in his album in the form of contact strips, are more refined than his earlier snapshots, and they resonate with Ishimoto's photographs shot in 1954. Two images by Tange (Figure 1.27) are particularly intriguing, as they show part of the New Palace lawn photographed from an identical angle but at two different times, as evinced by the presence and absence of shadows. The results point to his interest in a shift in time as manifested in space. In the 1960 book, one spread (Figure 1.28) reveals Ishimoto's own interest in the play of light and shadow. Tange selected two photographs by Ishimoto for the spread, one showing a view of the lawn from the Middle Shoin and another showing a different but continuous view over the same lawn, also seen from the Middle Shoin looking to the New Shoin, to offer a spatial view from these two vantage points and to visualize the relationship between the architecture and the garden. In the photograph on the right of the spread, the surrounding trees cast their shadows into the structure, and the image documents the diffusion of light and shadow into the architecture, the ephemeral into the permanent. The implied temporality of these shadows and their shifting relationship to the villa's *shoin* convey the dimensions of "time" and "space," giving Katsura a sense of eternity. Tange chose to juxtapose the two images in the spread, perhaps remembering his own snapshot sequence.

The similarities between images by Ishimoto and Tange, the commonalities in their ways of seeing, and their shared concerns with shadows and other elements beg a vexing question: Are these similarities coincidental or not? In light of Tange's photographic interest in Katsura, it is tempting to imagine that some direction was given to the photographer by the architect.<sup>96</sup> However, although Ishimoto forcefully

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<sup>96</sup> The architecture critic Kawazoe Noboru, Tange's close associate at the time, wrote in 1960 after the book was released that Tange had taken several hundred photographs of Katsura with his 35 mm camera and had also given Ishimoto some instructions on

maintains that his photographs were made as an independent project, he also acknowledges that the Tange family spent an afternoon with him during his month-long photography session of Katsura in 1954, and that he and the architect went around the villa together while Tange's daughter, Michiko, waited at the Moon-viewing Platform.<sup>97</sup> If anything, this episode indicates Tange's avid interest in Katsura and in Ishimoto's photography, and marks a meeting of the minds between two men who had similar ways of seeing the subject at hand.

### **Tange and the Tradition Debate of 1950s Japan**

Two things set Tange crucially apart from Ishimoto: the architect's intense investment in the "tradition debate" (*dentō ronsō*) that preoccupied Japan's cultural sphere in the mid-1950s and the key place Katsura occupied in his evolving position in that debate. The tradition debate concerned the creative interpretation of tradition in the context of modern artistic and design practices,<sup>98</sup> and it was both motivated and burdened by Japan's wartime past.

By 1952, when the Allied Forces' occupation of Japan had ended, nationalistic sentiments were resurfacing and the notion of tradition (*dentō*) gained renewed importance among the country's intellectual and cultural elite, who wanted to reconnect with the country's past and identity. The postwar invention of and search for tradition unfolded mainly in the print media, in particular in architecture and design

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how to photograph Katsura. Kawazoe Noboru, "Katsura to shōbu suru Tange: Dentō no hakai ni koso sōzō ga aru" (Tange fights Katsura: There is creation only when tradition is destroyed), *Nihon dokusho shinbun* (Japan bookreaders' newspaper), 1 August 1960, 3.

<sup>97</sup> Ishimoto Yasuhiro, Katō Toshio, and Uchida Michiko, interview by author, Tokyo, 14 September 2009.

<sup>98</sup> For an overview of the tradition debate, see Kitazawa Noriaki, "Dentō ronsō: 60-nendai abangarudo e no airo [typo?]" (The tradition debate: A narrow path to the 1960s avant-garde), in *Bijutsu hihyō to Nihon no sengo bijutsu* (Art criticism and postwar art in Japan), ed. AICA (Tokyo: Brücke, 2007), 103–22.

journals in the form of essays, group discussions, and photographic essays. The debate also extended to the fields of fine art, art criticism, art history, and even art education. Tradition was a precarious subject, and many postwar cultural elite and intellectuals found it difficult to discuss because of its perceived connection to imperial fascism and, in particular, to the wartime discourse of “overcoming modernity” (*kindai no chōkoku*), characterized by an anti-Western and anti-modern stance.<sup>99</sup>

According to architectural historian Yatsuka Hajime, Tange was implicated in the tradition debate because of the continuity found between his wartime and postwar design theories and practices.<sup>100</sup> His postwar designs—most notably the Hiroshima

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<sup>99</sup> The overcoming modernity discourse originated in the roundtable discussions that appeared in the two monthly (September and October) issues of the literary journal *Bungakukai* in 1942, where a wide range of cultural elite members searched for methodologies to define Japan’s own modernity. Isozaki Arata characterized the discourse as “[t]he ‘Overcoming Modernity’ debate remained essentially sterile because participants simply either praised or rejected the modern vis-à-vis a Japanese aesthetic or ethos.” Isozaki, *Japan-ness in Architecture*, 21. Beginning in the early 1950s, after the US occupation ended, the Korean War began, the Chinese Communist Party established its political power, and an anti-U.S. and nationalistic sentiment emerged in Japan. Such a sentiment was, for example, observed by literary critic Takeuchi Yoshimi in his 1951 essay titled “Kuni no dokuritsu to risō [independence of nation and ideal] and his 1959 essay “Kindai no chōkoku” [overcoming modernity], where he reflected on the true meaning of independence to Japan and investigated what the discourse might have meant and could mean, respectively, in postwar Japan. The overcoming modernity discourse generally encompasses the roundtable discussions, a book that resulted a year later from the discussions, and another roundtable discussion called “Sekaishi teki tachiba to Nihon” [an aspect of world history, and Japan]. The latter discussions appeared in three issues of the journal *Chuō Kōron* from 1941–42. These discussions were made among four scholars in philosophy and history, students of Nishida Kitarō and Tanabe Gen, core of the Kyoto philosophy school. Takeuchi Yoshimi, “Kindai no chōkoku” [overcoming modernity] originally appeared in 1959, in vol. 7 of *Kindai ka to dentō* [modernization and tradition] in *Kindai Nihon shisō shi kōza* [Lectureship on modern Japanese thought](Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 1959); reprinted in *A Selection of Takeuchi Yoshimi’s Writings* (Tokyo: Nihon Keizai Hyōronsha, 2007), 83.

<sup>100</sup> Yatsuka Hajime, *Shisō to shite no Nihon kindai kenchiku* (Modern Japanese architecture as thought) (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2005), 546. Kawazoe Noboru, the

Peace Center—must be understood in reference to his preceding unbuilt designs for the Memorial to the Creation of the Greater East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere (1942) and the Japan-Thailand Friendship Hall (1943). Tange's self-conscious anxiety about this continuity led him to revisit the issue of tradition within modern architecture and to create a credible manifesto for his evolving practice.

### **Gropius as a Catalyst for the Tradition Debate**

In his engagement with the tradition debate, Tange found an unexpected catalyst in Walter Gropius's 1954 visit in Japan (Figure 1.29), which significantly affected his thinking both about tradition and photography. A former director of the Bauhaus, Gropius had taught at the Graduate School of Design at Harvard University. With his wife, Ise, he traveled to Japan upon the invitation of the Japan Association of Architects and the International House of Japan during an exhibition of his designs at the National Museum of Modern Art in Tokyo. From May to August of that year, Gropius toured the country, visiting historical and architectural sites, lecturing, and attending conferences, such as one at Hakone, where he met with young Japanese architects, who enthusiastically received them. Gropius's lectures and discussions addressed a wide range of topics, including the interpretation of tradition in modern architecture, collectivism, housing issues, industrial design, and architectural

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theoretical instigator of the debate, later confirmed that Tange was made its "target," in "Kokuminteki chitsujo no keisei: Iwayuru Nihonteki na mono ni kanshite" (The formation of national order: On the so-called things Japanese)," *Shisō* (Thought) 449 (November 1961): 48. There, Kawazoe points out that the tradition debate began with an essay by the Marxist architect Nishiyama Uzō titled "jūtaku setsuga ni okeru minzoku dento to kokuminteki kadai" (ethnic tradition and national agenda in design of residence).

education.<sup>101</sup> As one of the architects hosting the couple, Tange discussed with Gropius such subjects as housing development and the evolution of modern architecture in relation to tradition.<sup>102</sup> Tange and other young architects accompanied the couple to various temples and shrines in Japan's old capitals. Their extensive itinerary included Tōdaiji in Nara and Ryōanji and Katsura in Kyoto.

Gropius's favorite place in Japan turned out to be Katsura, which he visited twice during the trip. He later commented: "Katsura's architecture, together with its garden, manifests the most superb expression of Japanese talent in its creation of architectural space in accordance with human scale. Here, spirit exceeds material. The excellence of conception, while expressed in a completely simple manner, allows the tangible to express the intangible. There, in every aspect, I find 'modernity' that transcends time, which may be considered the best trait of Japanese residential architecture."<sup>103</sup>

Gropius's praise for the seventeenth-century architecture provided a clue to many younger architects who had been struggling to locate tradition in their modern architectural creations. Tange sensed that Gropius found modernity in the simplicity of the garden at Ryōanji in Kyoto and that this modernity derives not from material rationality but from the Zen spirit that transcends materiality.<sup>104</sup> Through his tour with Gropius, Tange came to realize that black-and-white photography could enable him to look at the temple's garden symbolically and more clearly than seeing it in person.<sup>105</sup>

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<sup>101</sup> *Guropiusu to Nihon bunka* (Gropius and Japanese culture) (Tokyo: Shōkukusha [typo?], 1956), 400.

<sup>102</sup> Tange Kenzō, "Guropiusu no nokoshita yoin" (The reverberations of Gropius), in *ibid.*, 377.

<sup>103</sup> Mori Minoru, "Guropiusu hakase no Nihon-kan: Kyōto no kokenchiku teien ni tsuite" (Dr. Gropius' views on Japan: Regarding the old architectural gardens in Kyoto), in *ibid.*, 142.

<sup>104</sup> Tange, "Guropiusu no nokoshita yoin," in *ibid.*, 160.

<sup>105</sup> *Ibid.*

Gropius had an outsider's freedom to speak with effusive admiration on the relationship of Japanese tradition to modern architecture, the very topic that vexed Japanese architects so profoundly.<sup>106</sup> Yet Gropius's profuse praise for Katsura's architecture made Tange realize that Katsura in reality did not move him at all. The real Katsura appeared darker and more overwrought than the vision he had of it in his mind and in his photographs.<sup>107</sup> From this experience, Tange came to believe that an architect would not be able to create an "outer reality," or visible reality, without mediating tradition through an "internal reality."<sup>108</sup> Tange took the position that tradition exists as "an integral part of the self," and that such tradition had to be questioned, denied, destroyed, or deconstructed to be transformed into a creative force.<sup>109</sup> To Tange, photography was a key means of clarifying this internal reality and deconstructing and reinterpreting tradition with the goal of creating something new. He recognized in Ishimoto's photographs of Katsura a new and unconventional way of examining tradition—a way that dynamically embodied the transformative act that Tange hoped to achieve.<sup>110</sup>

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<sup>106</sup> Ibid., 376.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid., 378.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid., 381.

<sup>109</sup> Tange Kenzō, "An Approach to Tradition," *Japan Architect* (January–February 1959): 59–65, as quoted in Jonathan M. Reynolds, "Ise Shrine and a Modernist Construction of Japanese Tradition," *The Art Bulletin* 83, no. 2 (June 2001): 324.

<sup>110</sup> The artist Okamoto Tarō is a seminal figure in considering the role of photography in the tradition debate. His passion for photography traces back to his time in Paris during the 1930s, when he learned photographic skills from artists such as Brassai. Okamoto influenced Tange regarding the effective use of photography in conveying a position in the tradition debate. Okamoto, who positioned Jōmon clay as an energetic life source for contemporary art and design, used his own high-contrast black-and-white photographs of the prehistorical figurines and wares in his visually arresting article, "Yojigen to no taiwa—Jōmon doki ron (Dialogue with the fourth dimension: Theory of Jōmon earthenware)," which appeared in the February 1952 issue of *Mizue*. The June 1956 issue of *Shinkenchiku*, the journal's first issue made available in English as *Japan Architect*, and which included Tange's influential essay "The creation of contemporary architecture and Japan's architectural tradition,"

### ***Shinkenchiku* as a Forum for the Tradition Debate**

While preparing the 1960 *Katsura* publication with Ishimoto, Tange launched his discursive campaign on the pages of the journal *Shinkenchiku* (New architecture) in 1955. Under the editorship of Kawazoe Noboru, an architecture critic and Tange's close ally, the magazine boasted a monthly circulation of about eight thousand copies, exerting a growing and significant influence on the Japanese architectural community.<sup>111</sup> Its 1955 and 1956 issues explored the dialectics of tradition and modernity through photography, essays, discussions of recently built architectures, and a section titled "Classics" (*koten*) that featured photographs of premodern structures. Photography also played a central role in the journal's covers. The May 1956 issue featured an abstract image of the repeating arcs of a modern concrete roof of a medical clinic in a suburb of Tokyo (Figure 1.30), and the August 1956 issue featured a photograph of a mid-nineteenth-century thatched-roof *samurai* house of the Egawa family in Izu taken by Ishimoto (Figure 1.31), who had accepted photography assignments from the journal since 1954.

The August 1956 issue also published a compelling essay, "About Things Jōmonesque," by the renowned architect Shirai Seiichi (1905–1983), who wrote about the architecture featured on the cover.<sup>112</sup> In this article, Shirai addressed the dichotomy of Japan's prehistoric Jōmon (c. 10,500–300 B.C.E.) and Yayoi (c. 4th century B.C.E.–3rd century C.E.) cultures in the postwar context of the tradition

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featured Okamoto's photo-essay "Human drama in stone and tree." There, Okamoto argues with his own high-contrast black-and-white photographs of premodern rock gardens that Japanese gardens embody the dialectics of a series of opposing values: the organic and the inorganic; life and death; comfort and fear; and destruction and growth; as represented in the constant battle between ever-growing vegetation and seemingly immobile stones.

<sup>111</sup> Kawazoe Noboru, interview by author, Tokyo, 2 June 2009.

<sup>112</sup> Shirai Seiichi, "Jōmon teki narumono: Egawa-shi kyū Nirayamakan ni tsuite" (Things Jōmonesque: About the former Nirayama residence of the Egawas), *Shinkenchiku* (New architecture) 31 (August 1956): 4–8.

debate. Whereas the cultural manifestations of the Jōmon period, known for its cord-patterned, frame-formed earthenware vessels, were dynamic, vernacular, and populist (as seen in its pit-dwellings), those of the Yayoi period were sophisticated, elite, and aristocratic (as seen in its platform-type housing). Specifically, Shirai argued in favor of Jōmon culture, whose cultural potential he believed to be vital to the creative development of modern Japan because it had silently sustained the Japanese ethnic spirit. In the decaying house of the Egawas, Shirai saw the spirit of Jōmon culture. Ishimoto's photographs of the house dramatically enhanced the architect's words by emphasizing the textures and forms of this vernacular architecture, particularly the organic nature of its thatched roofs and pebbled floors. Of the numerous articles on the tradition debate, Shirai's essay was among the most visually arresting, and it held a powerful sway over Tange, who advocated for neither Jōmon nor Yayoi alone but a combination of the two.<sup>113</sup>

Tange's *Shinkenchiku* articles on tradition were illustrated by photographs of his architectural projects taken by himself and others. One published in the January 1955 issue was boldly titled "My Conception of Modern Architecture in Today's Japan: To Create Tradition." In it, he put forth his famous declaration "[Only] beauty can be functional" and his emphatic belief that an architect can express tradition in contemporary architecture through the interaction of the modern and the traditional.<sup>114</sup> These points were visually supported by photographs of his recent designs, including House in Seijō (1953), Tsuda University Library (1953), and Shimizu City Hall (1953).

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<sup>113</sup> Fujimori Terunobu, interview by author, Tokyo, 5 November 2007.

<sup>114</sup> Tange Kenzō, "Genzai Nihon ni oite kindai kenchiku o ikani rikai suruka: Dentō no sōzō no tame ni" (How to understand modern architecture in today's Japan: To create tradition," *Shinkenchiku* (New architecture) 30 (January 1955): 17.



His June 1956 essay, “Creation in Contemporary Architecture and Japan’s Architectural Tradition,” incorporated two of his own photographs: one of Daisen’in (see the third frame in Figure 1.23) and the other of Katsura, which helped to convey his point that the synergy of the Jōmon culture and the Yayoi culture is analogous to the synergy of the architectural styles of the vernacular *sukiya* (simply structured houses for the masses derived from teahouse architecture) and the sophisticated *shinden* (residential architecture for the nobility), both of which are found in Katsura.<sup>115</sup> In the 1960s book, Tange would illustrate his essay with photographs of figurines and houses from these two periods to make a clear visual distinction between the two cultures (Figure 1.32).

Katsura occupied an exemplary place in Tange’s thesis. Whereas certain of its traditional design elements (such as the *en* veranda and the *shōji* screen doors suitable to Japanese climate conditions) and spaces of social significance (such as the *piloti*-raised floors), could be adopted into contemporary architecture without any sentimental interpretation, Katsura embodied something more—a site of dialectic forces, where the tastes of the nobility (the imperial) coexist with those of the masses. Tange distanced Katsura from its imperial aristocratic tradition, recasting it as a modern symbol of postwar Japan. He closed his June 1956 essay by hinting at potential ways to approach and overcome tradition in modern architecture—ways that he announced he would further explore in the forthcoming book on Katsura.<sup>116</sup>

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<sup>115</sup> Tange Kenzō, “Gendai kenchiku no sōzō to Nihon kenchiku no dentō” (The creation of contemporary architecture and Japan’s architectural tradition), *Shinkenchiku* (New architecture) 31 (June 1956): 31.

<sup>116</sup> *Ibid.*, 36–37.

## **The Making of *Katsura***

The project of the 1960s book on Katsura was initially conceived by Ishimoto when he was approached by the publisher David-sha and its editor Kobayashi Hideo in 1954. The photographer's idea was to create a straightforward photo book to present his images of the imperial villa taken in 1953 and 1954. Tange, who had been invited by Ishimoto to participate in the project as an essayist, soon expanded his role to become the book's de facto general editor, picture editor, and publicist. A glimpse into the making of *Katsura* can be gained through recently discovered archival materials, including correspondence among Tange, Bayer, Gropius, Ishimoto, and Kobayashi and the production materials prepared for the publication.

The first indication of Tange's self-appointed role in the project can be found in his letters, dated July 29, 1955, to at least eight architects and critics outside of Japan, including Gropius, Phillip Johnson, and Charlotte Perriand. In them, he informed his colleagues about his plan to publish a book of Ishimoto's photographs on Katsura and sought their comments. One, to Gropius, reads: "Recently we have been thinking of putting out a new publication based on the pictures taken by Yasuhiro Ishimoto which I believe you will remember. . . It is our hope to bring this to the attention of readers all over the world and with this aim are preparing texts in English, French and German."<sup>117</sup>

Tange went on to report that out of the approximately 600 photographs taken by Ishimoto, 150 had been selected for the book, which would be 200 pages long and 12 by 12 inches in size. (The final trim size, at 10 3/4 by 11 1/4 inches, slightly deviated from this description.) Tange also asked Gropius to contribute as a co-author, stating:

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<sup>117</sup> Tange Kenzō, letter to Walter Gropius, 29 July 1955, Tange Papers, in the collection of Uchida Michiko, Tokyo. Although this unsigned letter was prepared under the names of both Tange and Ishimoto, it was prepared by Tange under the letterhead of Tange's university office without the knowledge of Ishimoto.

“It goes without saying that it would mean a great deal for us to have your support, and I am sure you yourself are aware of how much your voice would add for friends abroad.”<sup>118</sup> He concluded by offering to send Gropius the 150 selected photographs. The letter demonstrates how Tange tried to present the publication as an announcement to the world of his interpretive stance on Katsura and its relation to his postwar designs. In a reply dated 5 August 1955, Gropius would eventually accept the invitation, contributing an introduction that helped to position the book for an international audience interested in Japanese architecture.

### **Tange’s Croppings**

Ishimoto felt Tange’s strong hand of editorial intervention most in the architect’s cropping of his photographs: “Tange cropped [my photographs] right and left . . . he never listened to anything I said.”<sup>119</sup> These words saliently describe Ishimoto’s experience of the book project under the commanding editorship of Tange. He recalls that Tange provided specific cropping instructions for many of the photographs for the book. In retrospect, Tange’s intervention no doubt enhanced the photographs as a vehicle of the polemics he put forth in his essay, which interpreted Katsura as a dialectical synthesis of tradition and creation that serves as an inspiration for modern design.

Ishimoto’s recollection is corroborated by sixty-eight production prints discovered at his residence in Tokyo in 2007. These 8 x 10 prints, covered by tracing paper, were prepared by Ishimoto for the book production and readied by either the editor or designer for printing. Most of them bear the small label “all rights reserved by david publishing co., ltd. ginza, tokyo” on the reverse side, indicating that the prints

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<sup>118</sup> Ibid.

<sup>119</sup> Ishimoto, interview by author, Tokyo, 30 May 2009.

were created at the final or near-final stage of the design process (Figure 1.33). These prints (Figures 1.34) show Tange's cropping instructions in black, red, and sometimes blue pencil marks, noted either on the overlay sheets or in the margins of the photographs themselves. (The use of multiple colors could suggest the involvement of more than one person.) Most of the circled numbers marked in pencil on the overlay sheets correspond to the ordering of the images in the publication. Some overlay sheets bear other instructions, such as "Need more of the picture on left and right sides" (with arrows to show the desired widening of the image) (Figure 1.35 [right]) and "Make it whiter" (with shadings of the area to be whiter) (Figure 1.36 [left]).

Tange's signature appears on the reverse of one of these images (Figure 1.33), perhaps in approval of the cropping instructions, and the backs of other prints include notations that indicate Tange's organizational method. Many of them bear cursive notations enclosed in rectangular frames at the top left corner. On one, marked on the back with a caption in Japanese ("Ishimoto Yasuhiro / 'Katsura' / Seen from the garden, Middle Shoin, Music Room / and New Palace"), the notations in English (as seen on the reverse of other images, including Figure 1.34 [bottom]), such as "modular," "vista-perspective-continuity," and "vista continuity," reveal Tange's ways of seeing and classifying Ishimoto's Katsura photographs. They illustrate the thought process behind Tange's cropping instructions. The crop marks on the overlay sheet clearly indicate that the cambered roofs and part of the foreground should be eliminated (Figure 1.34 [middle]). The cropping would enhance the Mondrianesque patterns of the facade and accentuate the difference between the orderly *shoin* structure in the upper half and the organic flow of the garden in the lower half of the picture. Though this image appears in the publication according to the designated cropping instructions, others images sometimes deviate from the marked instructions, perhaps because of further adjustments made in later stages of production.

### **Tange's Editorship and Bayer's Book Design**

The high level of editorial and authorial control Tange exerted over the publication during the making of *Katsura*, which spanned five years from 1955 to 1960, is documented in the letters recently found in Tange's archives. They also indicate Herbert Bayer's involvement in the design process from early in the process. Bayer's communication with Tange and Kobayashi demonstrates Tange's authority even in the layout of the photographs, which was initially Bayer's responsibility. In a letter dated 4 August, 1955, Bayer conveyed to Kobayashi his acceptance to design the book based on his favorable impression of ten Ishimoto photographs he had received from the editor. Tange had chosen Bayer for his Bauhaus pedigree and used Bayer's acceptance to leverage Gropius's participation in the project. Tange also had another professional reason to involve Bayer: the designer had been involved in the organization of the International Design Conference in Aspen, which began in 1951. Recognizing the conference's importance in modern design, Tange desired to organize one in Japan, and thus wanted to be acquainted with the Austrian designer.

In his acceptance letter, Bayer sounded extremely pleased with the publication's prospects but was anxious to know about the book's printer and binder. He also was concerned about the logistics for the design, stating: "I beg you to send me as complete as possible information, for instance, to what size the photographs can go, which photos should be large, which one can be small, what kind of binding materials and cover stamping can be used."<sup>120</sup> Two months later, in October 1955, he wrote to Kobayashi to request ideas from Tange on "how the various photographs

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<sup>120</sup> Herbert Bayer, letter to Kobayashi Hideo, 4 August 1955, Tange Papers, in the collection of Uchida Michiko, Tokyo.

should be placed or juxtaposed.”<sup>121</sup> At this point, his inquiry was more indicative of the designer’s professional courtesy than of Tange’s heavy involvement in design. In fact, soon after Bayer’s acceptance, Tange wrote to Gropius, “We are looking forward to [Bayer’s] wonderful layout and his coming to Japan.”<sup>122</sup>

By early 1956, two hundred photographs by Ishimoto were sent to Bayer, who was to begin the layout design.<sup>123</sup> Tange later arranged to send him other illustrations, including an overall map showing the location of Katsura’s various buildings and gardens as well as detailed drawings of the plans and elevations of the individual pavilions and their interiors.<sup>124</sup> In June and July of 1957, according to Bayer’s diary entries, he spent a significant amount of time creating a draft layout.<sup>125</sup>

However, when Tange received Bayer’s initial layout plan sometime in late summer 1957, he was greatly dismayed and disappointed. Bayer had arranged Katsura’s pavilions in alphabetical order and had grouped the photographs accordingly. In August 1957, Kobayashi responded to Bayer on Tange’s behalf with their honest assessment of the disastrous layout design: “The division of the [layout] plan, which separates areas by letters of the alphabet, was made completely at random

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<sup>121</sup> Herbert Bayer, letter to Kobayashi Hideo, 5 October 1955, Tange Papers, in the collection of Uchida Michiko, Tokyo.

<sup>122</sup> Tange Kenzō, letter to Walter Gropius, 31 January 1956, Tange Papers, in the collection of Uchida Michiko, Tokyo.

<sup>123</sup> In *ibid.*, Tange states that he was going to send on the same date “the photos . . . with the detailed explanatory note.”

<sup>124</sup> Tange Kenzō, letter to Herbert Bayer, 18 June 1956, Tange Papers, in the collection of Uchida Michiko, Tokyo.

<sup>125</sup> Dominika Glogowski, telephone interview by author, Houston, 13 October 2009. A PhD candidate at the University of Applied Arts Vienna, Glogowski is completing a dissertation on the relationship between Isamu Noguchi and Herbert Bayer with regard to landscape in postwar Japan and has published “Herbert Bayer in the Context of the Japanese Architectural Debate 1960–1971,” in *Ahoy Herbert! Bayer and Modernism*, exh. cat. (Linz, Austria: Lentos Art Museum Linz, 2009), in which she reported her findings based on her study of Bayer’s diary entries, including those from June and July 1957.

and has nothing to do with the ordinary route followed in inspecting the palace, nor is it based on any organic, architectural concept of how to subdivide Katsura palace and its garden.”<sup>126</sup> Kobayashi apologetically offered two reasons for this outcome: “The first . . . is our realization that the information we gave you for your guidance has been highly insufficient, and in many ways, exceedingly inappropriate . . . a second mistake on our part was that of having sent you too many photos.”<sup>127</sup> Tange and Kobayashi suggested a solution to the designer: he should “delete from the layout those photos which appear . . . to be unnecessary duplication, distracting from the clarity of the image of Katsura that should be conveyed, and we shall make a very rough layout sketch to indicate our own image of Katsura that we would like to convey to the beholder of the book.”<sup>128</sup>

Following this letter, Tange apparently recruited the Japanese graphic designer Kamekura Yūsaku (1915–1997) to consult on the layout design, as Ishimoto recalls.<sup>129</sup> Tange asked Kobayashi to assure Bayer of their wish to keep him involved as the designer, but did not communicate with Bayer for some time about the status of the project, despite the designer’s repeated requests. This state of affairs put the project on hold for a while.

After more than a year, Bayer, feeling left out of the project, wrote to Kobayashi on 29 December 1958, to express his frustration. He had heard from Kamekura that part of the book printing was under way and stated, “I hope these [the proofs] are not the final and printed pages.”<sup>130</sup> This letter suggests that Kamekura, not

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<sup>126</sup> Kobayashi Hideo, letter to Herbert Bayer, 23 August 1957, Tange Papers, in the collection of Uchida Michiko, Tokyo.

<sup>127</sup> Ibid.

<sup>128</sup> Ibid.

<sup>129</sup> Ishimoto, interview by author, Tokyo, 20 November 2007.

<sup>130</sup> Herbert Bayer, letter to Tange Kenzō, 29 December 1958, Tange Papers, in the collection of Uchida Michiko, Tokyo.

Bayer, had been involved in revising the layout design. Although Tange and Kamekura subsequently consulted Bayer on such details as the book's binding and fonts, they did not immediately share the revised layout design with him. In a letter dated 15 January 1959, Kobayashi informed Bayer that the proofs of the photoengravings had been already completed and that a dummy of the book (without the typeset essays) had been created but that, because of some errors in the plates, he and Tange had decided to make corrections before sending the layout to him. In the same letter, Kobayashi stated that Tange had various suggestions, but that they would wait to share these with him once he had received the pages. In May 1959, Kobayashi traveled to New Haven to negotiate a co-publication contract with Yale University Press, where he met with graphic-design professors (including Paul Rand and Alvin Eisenman) and the university press's staff, who offered their input about the publication. Unsure about Bayer's design contribution, Chester Kerr of the press suggested to Kobayashi the possibility of disengaging Bayer.<sup>131</sup> The press requested that captions be added to the untitled photographs and that an aerial photograph of Katsura be inserted at the beginning of the publication, while assuring Kobayashi of the publication's future success in the United States.<sup>132</sup> During the discussions, it was agreed that Yale's press would hold the worldwide copyright to the English version, except in Japan, including the translation and reprinting rights.<sup>133</sup>

Finally, on 6 and 7 May, 1959, Kobayashi met with Bayer in Aspen, Colorado, for two full days to discuss various design aspects of the publication. For the plate section, Bayer suggested deleting six plates, changing the sizes of twenty-five

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<sup>131</sup> Chester Kerr, letter to Kobayashi Hideo, 5 June 1959, Yale University Press Katsura/Tange Papers, in the collection of Manuscripts and Archive, Yale University, New Haven, CT.

<sup>132</sup> Kobayashi Hideo, letter to Tange Kenzō, 19 and 27 May 1959, Tange Papers, in the collection of Uchida Michiko, Tokyo.

<sup>133</sup> Chester Kerr, letter to Kobayashi Hideo, 5 June 1959.



others, and inserting plans of the various pavilions at the beginning of each section. Bayer also suggested setting the type in Futura Book ten-point font and proposed a cover design with a white circle set against a background of blue cloth the color of ink used in ball-point pens—which describes almost exactly how the cover ultimately did appear.<sup>134</sup>

By August 1959, Bayer had recommended numerous changes in the final proof of the layout design, which would have affected more than half of the printing plates prepared for the publication.<sup>135</sup> It is uncertain how many of Bayer's changes were accepted by Tange and incorporated into the final version, though the designer's font specification obviously was not implemented. In his congratulatory letter to Bayer dated October 13, 1960, Kerr informed the designer that they were not able to use his designed book jacket, saying, "Juries always remove jackets, of course, and the book itself is all yours."<sup>136</sup> In light of this statement, it seems that some of the changes suggested by Bayer were accepted and implemented in the end.<sup>137</sup>

The preparatory work for the publication appears to have been completed by the time Tange left for Europe in early September 1959 (with plans to go then to Boston to teach at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology). The publishing contract with Yale University Press was completed at about the same time. A dummy book

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<sup>134</sup> Kobayashi Hideo, letter to Tange Kenzō, 14 May 1959, Tange Papers, in the collection of Uchida Michiko, Tokyo.

<sup>135</sup> Kobayashi Hideo, letter to Ishimoto Yasuhiro, 17 August 1959, Tange Papers, in the collection of Uchida Michiko, Tokyo.

<sup>136</sup> Chester Kerr, letter to Herbert Bayer, 13 October 1959, Yale University Press Katsura/Tange Papers, in the collection of Manuscripts and Archive, Yale University, New Haven, CT.

<sup>137</sup> The designer of this publication, Daphne Geismar, who received her graduate training in graphic design from Paul Rand at Yale University and is familiar with designs of Herbert Bayer, shared with me her valuable insight that the 1960 publication does not have the feel of Bayer's book design, pointing out, for example, that the font used for the essays is not his preferred font style. New Haven CT, 5 October 2009.

with the finalized prints was made available either at the year's end or early in 1960, and the finished product was distributed on the Japanese market in the late spring of 1960, about the same time or immediately after the World Design Conference was held in Tokyo in April. (The English version of the book was available in the United States in late October 1960 in time for the Christmas holidays.) Tange, who had returned to Tokyo in time for the conference, was thus able to witness the long-awaited release of *Katsura*. He sent complimentary copies to a circle of architects and critics in North America and Europe whom he had met, including José Luís Sert, Minoru Yamasaki, Kevin Lynch, Arne Korsmo, and C. Polonyi. On his receipt of the publication, Sert, then dean of the Graduate School of Design at Harvard, wrote to Tange in a letter dated 13 October 1960: "I want to thank you for sending me your beautiful book . . . it is the best I have seen on Japanese architecture and makes me wish more than ever that I could come to Japan to see the country and my friends . . . if you ever plan to come back to visit this country, please let me know as I would very much like to have you at this School."<sup>138</sup> Although the publication had been six years in the making, Tange ultimately accomplished his mission of positioning Japanese tradition as a synergistic force for contemporary creation and validating his own direction in modern architectural design via Ishimoto's photographs of Katsura. Indeed, the publication served as Tange's manifesto for his intellectual and architectural practices in the early postwar years.

### **Ishimoto's Disengagement**

Whereas Tange was instrumental in the book project, Ishimoto ceased to be involved after he had handed the photographs over to Kobayashi (and Tange) by late

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<sup>138</sup> Jose Luis Sert to Kenzō Tange, 13 October 1960, Tange Papers, in the collection of Uchida Michiko, Tokyo.

1954 or early 1955. Ishimoto and his wife, Shigeru, had left Tokyo in December 1958 with a grant Ishimoto had received from the Minolta Corporation to spend three years in Chicago creating a new series of photographs focusing on the city's people and architecture. There are a few possible reasons for Ishimoto's disengagement. First, the enormous difference in the status and reputation of Ishimoto and Tange would have placed Ishimoto in the backseat for the project. Second, since Ishimoto was used to entrusting an editor or publisher in publishing his photographs in a journalistic context, he could have assumed the same process for this book. Nevertheless, he was eager for the release of *Katsura*, which was to have been his first book in print (although *Someday Somewhere*, issued in 1958, wound up being published before *Katsura*). Shigeru wrote several times to Tange in early 1959, asking about the status of the publication project and conveying their desire that it be published even a day sooner, though Tange never personally replied.<sup>139</sup> Ishimoto saw the book and the attention it might glean as an opportunity to bolster his reputation as a photographer in the United States. Indeed, when the Japanese version of *Katsura* was published in spring 1960, he began sending Japanese copies of the book to potential reviewers in the United States, including *The Architectural Forum* and *Harper's Magazine*, which upset Yale University Press because it scooped their own marketing efforts with reviewers to whom they usually gave a priority, such as the New York Review of the Book.<sup>140</sup>

To complicate matters, Ishimoto was angered by one of the advertisements developed for the book in the United States, which credited Tange and Gropius as the authors but noted that the book was merely illustrated with photographs by

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<sup>139</sup> Ishimoto Shigeru, letter to Tange Kenzō, 23 January, 5 March, and 17 March, 1959, Tange Papers, in the collection of Uchida Michiko, Tokyo.

<sup>140</sup> Edwin Stein, Jr., internal memorandum to Chester Kerr, 11 October 1960, Tange/Katsura Papers, in the collection of Manuscripts and Archive, Yale University, New Haven, CT.

Ishimoto.<sup>141</sup> Ishimoto claimed to the press' editor, Edwin Stein, Jr., that his rights had been trampled, that his independent photographic project had been commandeered by Kobayashi and Tange, and that he had no contact with the Japanese publisher Zōkeisha, which had published the book in Japan.<sup>142</sup> (The lack of contract resulted from the dissolution of David-sha in 1958. Afterward, Kobayashi took the project to the new publisher, Zōkeisha.<sup>143</sup>) In response, Stein assured Ishimoto that the press had given and would continue to give him full credit on the title page and wherever else they could.<sup>144</sup> Although Ishimoto had ceded physical control over the book's making to Tange, who had assumed de facto authorship of the publication, the young photographer maintained his claim in the authorship.

### **Looking at *Katsura*: The Book's Structure and Image Flow**

Tange's own authorship is revealed not only in his essay but also in the sensitive sizing, pacing, and arrangement of images and texts throughout *Katsura*. The

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<sup>141</sup> My review of Yale University Press's book announcement and several book reviews have revealed that the press's announcement that appeared in the autumn 1960 issue of *Art Journal* (vol. 20, no. 1) and the December 1960 issue of *The Journal of Architecture Historians* (vol. 19, no. 4) list Ishimoto as the third of the three authors after Gropius and Tange. This advertisement emphasizes that Ishimoto's photographs only illustrate the essays by Gropius and Tange. A book review on *Katsura* that appeared in the February 1962 issue of *The Journal of Asian Studies* (vol. 21, no. 2) lists only Gropius and Tange as co-authors, entirely skipping Ishimoto in the author information.

<sup>142</sup> Edwin Stein, Jr., Yale University Press Internal Memo to Chester Kerr, regarding Ishimoto's telephone conversation of 6 October 1960, Yale University Press Tange/Katsura Papers, in the collection of Manuscripts and Archive, Yale University, New Haven, CT.

<sup>143</sup> In 1958, the owner of David-sha, Tōyama Nao (who was a son of Tōyama Gen'ichi, a founder of one of the largest securities brokerage houses in postwar Japan, Nikkō Securities) moved to the United States, and thus the company was dissolved. Katō Toshiko, interview by author, Tokyo, 20 September 2009.

<sup>144</sup> Edwin Stein, Jr., letter to Ishimoto Yasuhiro, 13 October 1959, Yale University Press Tange/Katsura Papers, in the collection of Manuscripts and Archive, Yale University, New Haven, CT.

title page is graced with the Chinese character for *katsura*, 桂 (the Japanese name for the tree *Cercidiphyllum japonicum*), calligraphically rendered by the noted avant-garde calligrapher Shinoda Tōkō (born 1913)(Figure. 1.37). The volume begins with Gropius's introduction, "Architecture in Japan," followed by Tange's essay, "Tradition and Creation in Japanese Architecture." Between these texts is the general plan of Katsura and a matching aerial photograph.<sup>145</sup> Tange's essay is followed by Ishimoto's images, which, coupled with Tange's prose headings and captions, visually exemplify the diametric forces in operation at Katsura: the visible and the invisible, nature and architecture, and tradition and modernity.

The photographs are divided into six sections, representing Katsura's pavilions and the spaces around and between them: "Approach to Shoin Buildings," "Interior of Shoin Buildings," "Gepparō," "Approach to Shōkintei," "Shōkatei and Onrindō," and "Shōiken." Each section begins with a detailed floor plan, which, along with the headings and captions, guides the reader on a two-dimensional tour through the villa. The photography sections of *Katsura* exhibit a lyrical synergy created by the layout of the captions and photographs in a seamless narrative. The first section, "Approach to Shoin Buildings," begins by highlighting the textures of the villa and its environment. The first caption for this section reads: "The concept behind Katsura begins with an urge to express sense impressions in terms of natural textures. The rocks, moss, bamboo, and trees form patterns without losing their natural look or feel."<sup>146</sup> These words are accompanied by two images featured on one spread (Figure 1.38). On the

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<sup>145</sup> My examination of the Tange Papers in the collection of Uchida Michiko, Tokyo, has revealed that this photograph and the individual photo captions were added toward the end of the design process, at the behest of Yale University Press. Kobayashi Hideo, letter to Tange Kenzō, 27 May 1959, Tange Papers, in the collection of Uchida Michiko, Tokyo.

<sup>146</sup> Ishimoto Yasuhiro and Tange Kenzō, *Katsura: Tradition and Creation in Japanese Architecture*, trans. Charles S. Terry (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1960), 38.

left, a vertical image of a bamboo fence, located between Katsura's Main Gate and the Imperial Gate, demonstrates the organic, handmade geometry of the woven fence. On the right, a close-up image displays the finely made structure of the gate's roof. Together, the images illustrate the space's uniformity, consistency, and order. Following this spread are a number of photographs devoted to details of the various elements and materials that make up the villa and its grounds, such as a wood floor, a clay wall, and a moss-covered stone. These images reflect the photographer's subjective approach to the villa; set side-by-side, they invite the reader to see how these different materials harmoniously interact and coexist in a shared space.

These close-up views also reveal the complex structure of the architecture. In one, the edges of screens and a woven wall meet in a Mondrianesque composition. Others zoom in on architectural elements such as *tatami* floor mats, *shōji* screens, and a hearth, giving no sense of their actual sizes. On one spread (Figure 1.39), these fragmented, tightly cropped elements are arranged in a rhythmic order, appearing to float against the white background of the page. They convey the sense of Katsura's architecture as a composition of human-scale modules and units. Accentuated by the cropping and grouping, these images demonstrate the universality of such units, whether in traditional or modern architecture, and whether used in Japan or in the West (as seen in Le Corbusier's Modular unit concept). They reveal how the measurements used in Japanese traditional architecture are based on the human body, and thus transcend time and place. These photographic fragments are displayed in a cinematic manner to encourage a visceral response on the part of the viewer. This stylistic approach to the layout is particularly notable in a grouping of photographs of four different textures in a Miesian grid on one page (Figure 1.40).

Despite Tange's interventional picture editing, Ishimoto's singular aesthetics permeate the entirety of the publication. His photographs assert formalism,

experimentalism, and a purity of design, reflecting his training at the Institute of Design in Chicago. Because he photographed the subject in a systematic yet highly original way, his resulting photographs of Katsura are documentary (like his photographs of African American children in Chicago) and abstract (like his photograph of snow on dark steps) at the same time. Ishimoto's images extract the essence and force of Katsura's form, tone, and texture, and their abstraction makes the familiar unfamiliar.

As the artist Okamoto Tarō (1911–1996) noted, one of the characteristics of Ishimoto's photography, at least to Japanese audiences at that time, was the seeming absence of a preconceived notion or ideology (*gainen*), or stated differently, the absence of a sense of tradition.<sup>147</sup> (This statement relates back to Minor White's observation of Ishimoto's photographs as "absentminded.") Okamoto argued that such an absence of ideology was missing in the work of contemporary Japanese master photographers such as Hamaya Hiroshi (1915–1999), whose images in his photographic book *Children in Kōtō, Tokyo (Kōtō no kodomo tachi)*, depicting children in Tokyo's slum district, were stylistically based on photo-academism and Japanese naturalism. This photo book was charged with the artist's intention to photograph something socially and politically important. Further, Okamoto argued that, unlike other photographers, such as Kimura Ihei (1901–1974) and Domon Ken (1909–1990), the younger Ishimoto had begun photography at a point beyond Hamaya's academism, Okamoto described Ishimoto's photography, instead, as both documentary and pragmatic (*sokubutsu teki*), characteristics that derived from the New Objectivity style.<sup>148</sup>

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<sup>147</sup> Okamoto and Ishimoto, "Shashin taidan: Okamoto Tarō and Ishimoto Yasuhiro," 185–88.

<sup>148</sup> Ibid., 186.

Whether or not Ishimoto intentionally cultivated this absence of ideology, his neutral and objective yet compellingly original and abstract visions of Katsura were open to interpretation, and thus provided an excellent means by which Tange could promote his own message. Tange, alert to the complexity and dichotomy of Ishimoto's working method, found that Ishimoto's images correlated well with the friction and synergy of Katsura. In both, he recognized a balance of intense creative forces and rational order.

Such dualism is emphasized in many of the book's photographs and often accentuated by Tange's cropping, and the image of the Moon-viewing Platform in the Old Shoin (Figure 1.41) is a perfect case in point. This platform is pictured four times in *Katsura*, and from different perspectives and angles. Tange's caption summarizes his point: "The vista from the Old Shoin out over the verandas, the Moon-viewing Platform, the pond, and the hillock to the moon is reminiscent of the lyrical mood of perspectives cherished in the aristocratic age, but it is interrupted by the stubbornly contrasting rock formations. Contrasts of this sort, which are found throughout Katsura, create tense space."<sup>149</sup> This statement supports Tange's central concept of the tension and synergy that arise from two different but coinciding forces: the order and consistency of the bamboo veranda stand in contrast to the organic vitality of the rock arrangement, covered with moss and fern. Another excellent example of this visual dualism is the photograph captioned "The Middle Shoin, Music Room, and New Palace seen from the garden" (Figure 1.34), which juxtaposes the orderly geometry of the base of the architecture with the garden's organically arranged stepping-stones covered with moss and grass.

In the spread captioned "The New Palace and the lawn" (Figure 1.42), by cropping out the curved roofs and by sequencing similarly cropped images of exterior

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<sup>149</sup> Ishimoto and Tange, *Katsura*, unpaginated.



walls and of the bases of the *shoin*, Tange forcefully reveals a pattern in Ishimoto's photographs of the New Palace. The repeating geometric exterior walls create the illusion that the structure might continue over or even transcend time. Tange sought to evoke the universality of time and space found in traditional Japanese architecture. He also wanted to enhance the geometry of the structure to suggest a resonance between Katsura and Modernist, for example Miesian, architecture. The vertical juxtaposition of two almost identical photographs of the same New Palace structure with slightly different arrangements of the *fusuma* (sliding wall-panels) not only illustrates the function of the panels but also emphasizes the spatial effects of the different arrangements, thus revealing a dynamism that is not immediately apparent in the traditional architecture. The whiteness and geometry of the palace walls are heightened by the dark brown lines of the columns, the crossbeams under the veranda, the sills, and the lintels. In addition, the various image scales throughout the publication—for example, in this spread, the two differently sized photographs of the same pavilion—disorient the viewer and create a labyrinthine effect.

Cropping was used as a technique to direct the reader to specific spatial elements. By eliminating extrinsic details, certain effects could be emphasized. Two examples of aggressive cropping include a photograph captioned “Gepparō: fusuma, shoji” (Figures 1.43 and 44) and another captioned “Vicinity of the Central Gate” (Figures 1.45 and 46). The former is a horizontal fragment of a photograph that depicts a tea-service area in the Gepparō pavilion surrounding the loggia with its dirt floor. Shot at an angle, the photograph shows the progression of space, but its cropped version in the 1960 publication conveys only a narrow horizontal portion of the overall space, creating a kaleidoscopic effect of *shōji* screens, each slightly tilted to evoke a sense of cinematic mystery. In the other example, “Vicinity of the Central Gate,” the top third of the photograph was cropped horizontally. As a result, the reader is directed

to the dynamic collision of the three distinct elements: pebbles, an earthen wall, and a bamboo fence.

In *Katsura*, Tange desired to establish both a new social reality and an approach to the masses through his postwar designs. He wanted postwar modern architecture, unlike the villa of Katsura, which was originally created for the enjoyment of the imperial family, to provide an open space of social importance to the masses. The raised floor of the Middle Shoin and Music Room is emphasized in a photograph captioned “The Music Room and the New Palace.” This image reminded both Tange and Ishimoto of the use of *pilotis* in Le Corbusier’s Villa Savoye and in Mies’s Lake Shore Drive Apartments. To Tange, a space created by *pilotis* was a space of social significance, similar to the space created by the columns of the Ancient Agora of Athens or Rome’s Forum.<sup>150</sup> Tange frequently utilized *pilotis* in his own architecture of the 1950s, including the House in Seijō and the Kagawa Prefectural Office Building, where the space below the floor serves as an open site for gatherings. By giving centrality in the Music Room photograph to the area beneath the raised floor, Tange hints at how this traditional arrangement of space can lend a dynamic force to modern architectural practice. In addition, the photograph shows a compositional and spatial complexity, emphasizing the contemporary nature of the details in the architectural and garden designs—something Tange tried to bring to the fore throughout the 1960 *Katsura* publication.

In his Hiroshima Peace Center (Figure 1.47), Tange used *pilotis* to create a social space. Tange had argued that the work of an architect, as an intermediary who creatively reinvents tradition, should be shared with the masses.<sup>151</sup> Thus, the Peace

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<sup>150</sup> Kawazoe Noboru, “Tange Kenzō ron” (Theory of Tange Kenzō), in *Genjitsu to sōzō: Tange Kenzō 1946–1958* (Reality and creation: Tange Kenzō 1964–1958) (Tokyo: Bijutsu Shuppansha, 1966), 10.

<sup>151</sup> Tange Kenzō, “Dentō to sōzō ni tsuite” (On tradition and creation), in *ibid.*, 205.

Center's central space, created by *pilotis*, is Tange's reinvention of a design element found in a premodern architecture. As shown in the two photographs shot by Tange (Figure 1.48) from the top of the staircase to the center's raised floor, more than fifty thousand mourners assembled in the space and on its contiguous plaza for the tenth memorial service for the atomic victims in Hiroshima on August 9, 1955. To Tange, the views captured in these photographs eloquently demonstrated his success in fulfilling his intentions to create a space for the masses.<sup>152</sup>

In his sizing, cropping, and arrangement of Ishimoto's images, Tange illustrated not only his position on the tradition debate but also his proposal for a new direction in postwar architecture. The book launched his ideas on an international scale and had a lasting impact on Japanese architecture and architects for years to come.

### ***Katsura Revisited: A New Edition (1971) and a New Book (1983)***

Katsura was the subject of two later books, one in 1971 and another in 1983, which also featured photography by Ishimoto. Whereas the 1971 publication amounted to a revised and redesigned edition of the 1960s book, the 1983 book was a completely new book consisting of color photographs Ishimoto had taken after the villa's restoration in 1982. These two publications provide insights into Tange's photo-editorial manipulation of the 1960 book, as well as into the collaborative relationship between the architect and the photographer and their subsequent ideological and aesthetic shifts.

The differences between the 1960 and 1971 editions bring to light Tange's orchestration of the original publication. As for Ishimoto, he does not recall being notified that the new edition was being planned.<sup>153</sup> The 1960 publication was revised

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<sup>152</sup> Tange Kenzo, "Minshu to kenchiku" (The masses and architecture), in *ibid.*, 34.

<sup>153</sup> Ishimoto, interview by author, Tokyo, 20 November 2007. However, the foreword to the English 1972 edition by Tange states that it was his and Ishimoto's joint

in its layout and content when it was re-issued in 1971 by Chūō Kōronsha in Japan and in 1972 by Yale University Press in the United States. The purpose of the new edition was to replace the old photographic plates with crisp new ones and to erase references to the Bauhaus by removing Gropius's introduction and Bayer's design input from the publication. Although the 1971 edition utilized new plates of Ishimoto's same photographs from the original edition, the Japanese graphic designer Kamekura Yūsaku, working this time without Bayer, laid them out moderately differently. A few of the photographs were replaced and several were adjusted either by cropping or resizing. For example, an uncropped version of the photograph captioned "Gepparō: fusuma, shoji" was used in this edition. None of the photographs bleeds off the page, as they had in the previous version; instead, each one is surrounded by a white margin. In some places, the order of the photographs was shuffled to enhance a certain narrative. Although Kamekura changed parts of the design, the basic layout of the publication stayed recognizably familiar. The fact that many of the photographs maintained their original cropping and captions suggests that Tange maintained his role in the making of the revised edition.

Between 1960 and 1971, Tange's career flourished against the background of the changing political, economic, and social conditions of Japan. His design principle shifted from functionalism to structuralism. This evolution can be seen in the shift from his designs of the 1950s, such as the Hiroshima Peace Center and the Kagawa Prefectural Government Building, to the utopian urbanism of his Tokyo Plan in 1960 and the megastructure of his master plan for the Japan World Exposition '70. Yet *Katsura* never lost its relevance in his strategic thinking as a site of the dialectic forces

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decision to create new plates of the original photographs from 1953 and 1954, rather than having Ishimoto re-photograph the villa, and to redesign the book, including the photography layout. Ishimoto Yasuhiro and Tange Kenzō, *Katsura: Tradition and Creation in Japanese Architecture* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1972), 7.

of the Jōmon and Yayoi cultures. In his new foreword to the 1971 edition, while recognizing the success of the 1960 edition, Tange emphasized the importance of the new edition: “The conflict and interaction between two traditions that are distinct in Japanese culture—an aesthetic, lyrical frame of mind and an underlying vital energy—always provide us with a basic subject for investigation. We will feel rewarded if the revised edition gives the reader a better understanding of these forces.”<sup>154</sup> The revised book also suggests Tange’s continuing high regard for Ishimoto’s photographs.

Ishimoto published his own book on Katsura, *Katsura Villa: Space and Form*, in 1983 by Iwanami Shoten in Japan and in 1987 by Rizzoli in the United States.<sup>155</sup> For this later publication, Ishimoto photographed Katsura after the villa’s restoration in 1982 using both color and black-and-white film and a 4 x 5 large-format camera with a wide variety of lenses, including a 65 mm wide lens. By this time, not only had Katsura changed as a result of major restoration work, but Ishimoto’s photography had also changed drastically over the course of thirty years.

In the process of making this new book, Ishimoto reviewed the color images, which were laid out by graphic designer Ōta Tetsuya, who has since worked on most of the photographer’s publications. Both Ishimoto and Ōta recall that almost no picture editing or cropping was done for the publication.<sup>156</sup> Significantly, Ishimoto made a point of photographing some of the same locations featured in the 1960 edition from similar angles. In addition, he photographed places and objects that were omitted from the previous publication. As the architect Isozaki Arata, who wrote an essay to accompany the color photographs, later pointed out, the type of visual information in

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<sup>154</sup> Isozaki Arata and Ishimoto Yasuhiro, *Katsura rikyū/Katsura Villa: Kūkan to katachi* (Space and form) (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1983), 6.

<sup>155</sup> Isozaki, *Japan-ness in Architecture*, 252.

<sup>156</sup> Ishimoto, interview by author, Tokyo, 5 June 2009.

the 1983 publication is fundamentally different from that contained in the 1960 publication, often making the villa look entirely different.<sup>157</sup> Ishimoto admits that he found it extremely difficult to create another body of work on Katsura.<sup>158</sup> He was afraid of not being able to surpass the avant-garde nature of the earlier black-and-white images. However, part of his motivation to photograph the same site was to fully realize his own artistic vision of the architecture under different circumstances.

By then, his attitude toward modernism had changed greatly. His own interest in creating photography interrogating “tradition” had been kindled by his experience, in 1976, of photographing hundreds of Buddhist deities pictured in what is known as the Mandala of the Two Worlds (*Ryōkai mandara*), a National Treasure preserved at Shingon’in, a subtemple of the Tōji complex in Kyoto. This project was later made into a special boxed collector’s edition, titled *The Mandala of the Two Worlds: The Legend of Shingonin* (1977). Ishimoto recalls:

I became deeply involved with this icon of the universe, and it was a startling revelation for me. I had never personally experienced such a strange, mysterious, beauty before: it profoundly affected my whole being. The sensuous, even voluptuous beauties of the Womb Realm Mandala, contrasted with, and yet organically complemented by the pristine formalism of the Diamond Realm Mandala, led me naturally to meditations on the accompanying Buddhist philosophy of *funi*, or nonduality. The supposedly separate or contradictory phenomena, such as maximum and minimum, positive and negative, physical and spiritual, life and death, are actually mutually interdependent and constitute cosmic illustrations of the principle of

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<sup>157</sup> Isozaki, *Japan-ness in Architecture*, 254–55.

<sup>158</sup> Ishimoto, interview by author, Tokyo, 20 May 2008.

non-duality expressed by the lines from the sutras: “Though two, yet not two.”<sup>159</sup>

In this experience of “seeing the truth of the universe,” Ishimoto realized that the beauty he had pursued until then was a “subtractive” beauty, as he wanted to “strip off excess, unnecessary features and extract only the essence, only the ‘correct’ forms.”<sup>160</sup> He therefore reexamined the aesthetics he had once espoused, allowing himself to “entertain doubts about modernism” and to ask if modernism had “tried to tidy up the world and its people rather too much.”<sup>161</sup> Katsura was naturally an object of reconsideration:

The first time I photographed Katsura was right after I got out of school in Chicago. This was prior to its restoration—within the architecture there was no decoration. It was very monochromatic and had clean simple lines—like modern design—and it was just right for me back then. There was no color, so its essence was revealed directly. When I photographed Katsura for the second time, there was color. It was restored to its original style—if I had seen it first in the restored condition, I might have strongly rejected it. I wouldn’t have been ready to accept it. It has an attraction, but if I had seen the decoration first, I wouldn’t have accepted it. By making the photographs of *Mandala* between the first and second Katsura photographing, I came to accept a wider range of things. I came to accept decorative things—which I had previously rejected out of a certain aesthetics I had back then. So, in 1982, I was able to approach Katsura more openly. It expresses the Japanese aesthetic principle of *kirei-sabi*,

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<sup>159</sup> Ishimoto Yasuhiro, “Postscript,” trans. John D. Lamb, in *Katsura Villa: The Ambiguity of Its Space* (New York: Rizzoli, 1987), 265.

<sup>160</sup> Ibid.

<sup>161</sup> Ibid., 265–66.

which is a slightly expanded version of *wabi-sabi*; by doing *Mandala*, I started to open myself to that sort of thing.<sup>162</sup>

Color photography, in other words, enabled Ishimoto to add another dimension to his earlier black-and-white photography, revealing many additional details. It lent an aura of contemporariness to the architecture, but, as a result, the architecture was visually rendered in a completely different light, sometimes appearing as a static object. Even when shooting at the same location and from a similar angle, he found that, with color, he was able to make a difference in visualizing Katsura. Isozaki, who wrote an essay for the 1983 book, was involved in the publication's making from a relatively early point, but did not edit the images. Because of this lack of editing, Ishimoto acknowledges that the images became wholly his own. With a heightened sense of the villa's renewed beauty, he photographed Katsura, this time including even its ornate shelves and triangular roofs, and in the process came to the realization that Katsura was, indeed, "a stately pleasure dome for the aristocracy of the Edo period."<sup>163</sup>

All in all, the 1983 book, with its more consistent sizing of color photographs, does not portray the sense of movement or dynamism created by the layout of the photographs in the 1960 *Katsura*. This uniformity does not convey the sensation of taking an imagined tour of the villa, of walking from one teahouse to the next and noticing details along the way. A sense of formal "architectural photography" permeates the interior images. The absence of prose headings in the new book also effaces the poetic quality of the earlier book. However, the color images are sumptuously rich (often to the point of distraction) and always focused and pristine. Each image undeniably reflects Ishimoto's photographic mastery. Comparisons of

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<sup>162</sup> Ishimoto Yasuhiro, "Interview 1," in *Ishimoto Yasuhiro shashin-ten 1946–2001* (Yasuhiro Ishimoto Photography Exhibition 1946–2001) (Kōchi: The Museum of Art, Kōchi, 2001), 144–45.

<sup>163</sup> Ishimoto, *Katsura Villa: The Ambiguity of Its Space*, 266.



similar images from the two books reveal their discrepancies. For instance, two images of the same stone pavement of the Inner Garden convey almost entirely different information. The black-and-white image (Figure 1.49), narrowly cut, focuses on the layered arrangement of rocks and stones of various shapes. The verticality of the image gives us a sense of direction. In contrast, in the color version (Figure 1.50), the details take prominence over the composition as a whole. The color image's wider view and the details of the gemlike stones may distract viewers from appreciating its dynamic overall composition.

In another example, the color photograph "The Middle Shoin, Music Room, and New Palace seen from the garden" (1981–82)(Figure 1.51) juxtaposes the order and rationality of the geometric main *shoin* and the well-tended garden with its beautifully arranged stepping-stones, whereas the black-and-white photograph of the same location shot in 1954 conveys only the sense of dynamism and dualism. However, by including the structure's angular roof in the former image, Ishimoto acknowledges the villa's more elaborate historical architectural details.

Color photography enabled the artist to capture a full range of hues, including nuanced shades of gold and silver used in some of the renovated interior walls and screens. For example, in the color photograph "Interior of the Old Shoin, viewed from the Veranda Room" (Figure 1.52), golden tones in the brand-new *tatami* and *fusuma*, with their gold-leaf family crests, distinguish the space, contrasting impressively with the brown cedar columns and the decorative wood filigree transom. However, the colors once again detract somewhat from the compositional dynamics and from the element of time, as represented in the older photograph.

As Ishimoto has said, with color he did not shy away from photographing details of ornate and painted shelves, as seen in images such as "Dais and the Katsura Shelves in the Main Room of the New Garden, viewed from the south-east." In the

1960 book, curves and decorations were seen as kitsch. Every effort had been made to avoid them, both by Ishimoto when he was photographing the villa and by Tange when he was editing the photographs. However, the modernist abhorrence of kitsch did not carry through to his new color photography.

Ishimoto's color photographs suggest not only the change in the subjects Ishimoto found desirable at the other end of his lens, but also the shift in his interpretation of modernity through photography. In these images, created nearly thirty years after Ishimoto's return to Japan, the notion of tradition arguably had become familiar and anesthetized to Ishimoto. The 1983 book marks a sharp departure from his previous radical and avant-garde ways of seeing Katsura.

Ultimately, *Katsura: Tradition and Creation in Japanese Architecture*, issued in 1960, was, and still is, a visually and ideologically charged photographic publication, created at the height of upheavals in Japan's political, social, intellectual, and artistic milieus of the 1950s. The book, and Ishimoto's photographs in particular, provided the perfect means by which Tange could address the tradition debate in Japan and bolster his new direction in architecture after World War II. The success of the book and its international circulation made Katsura a topic of great interest among architects and photographers. Although Ishimoto's photographic aesthetics permeate the publication, and although Ishimoto and Tange indeed shared a similar photographic vision of Katsura, Tange's aggressive cropping and sequencing of Ishimoto's images subordinated the photographer's vision to serve the architect's own agenda. In essence, the book became not only the container but also the constitution of Tange's postwar ideology of architecture, and it demonstrated the power of photography to convey these ideas. Despite their shared vision of Katsura, the two men approached the subject from different backgrounds and with different intentions—and these intentions changed over time. Now, fifty years later, we have a more complete

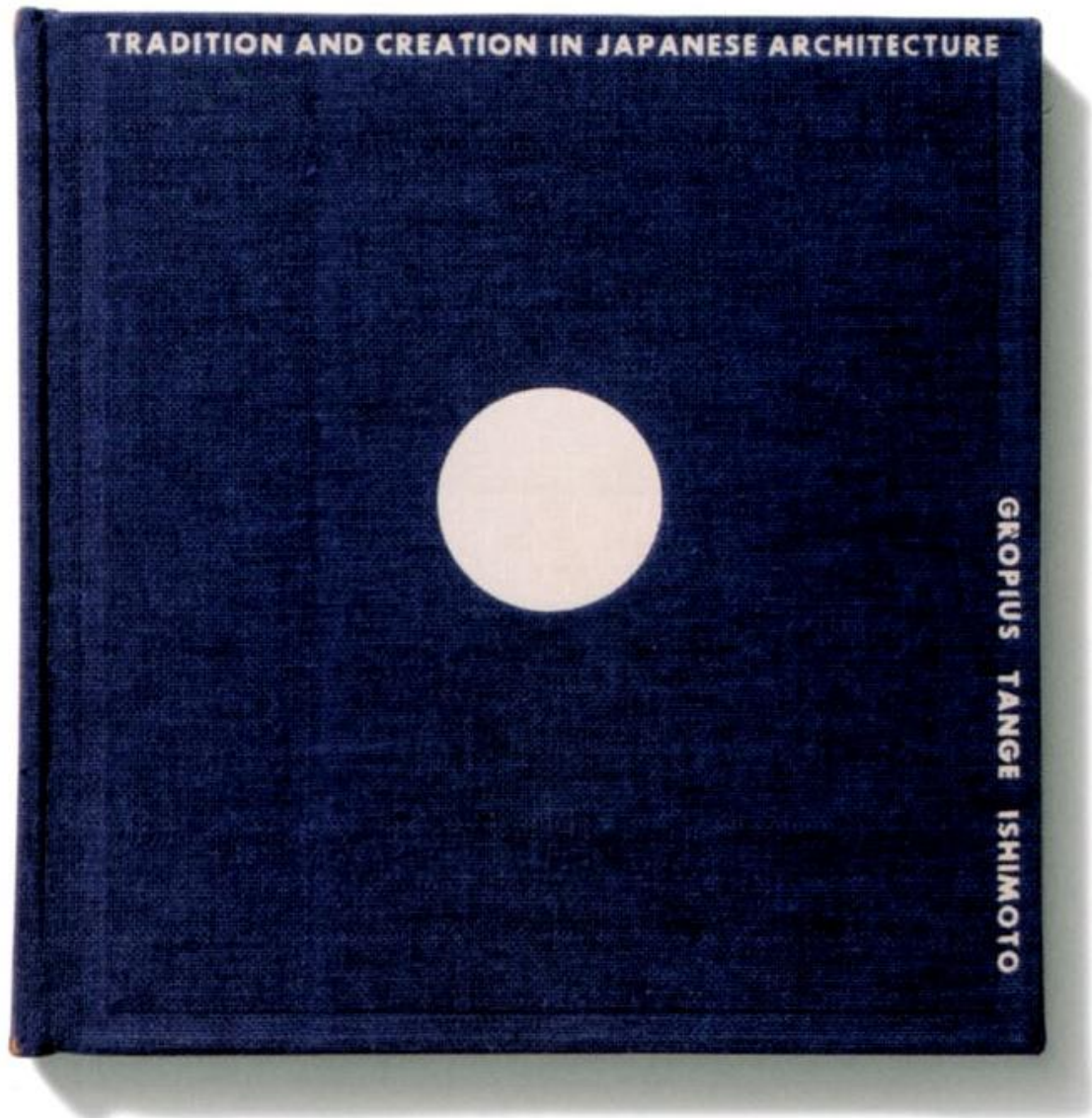
picture of how Ishimoto first saw Katsura, and how his impressions of the site evolved with his own development as an artist. Yet his enduring interest in the villa, and the fact that architects and photographers alike have returned again and again to the site as a place of beauty and inspiration, a place of inquiry and ambiguity, testify to the fact that Katsura is, indeed, an eternal subject of interpretation and observation.

Figure 1. 1



Portrait of Ishimoto Yasuhiro by Ōtsuji Kiyoji (c.1953)

Figure 1. 2



Front cover, *Katsura: Tradition and Creation in Japanese Architecture* (1960)

Figure 1.3



Aerial view of Katsura Imperial Villa, a photograph by Iwamiya Takeji

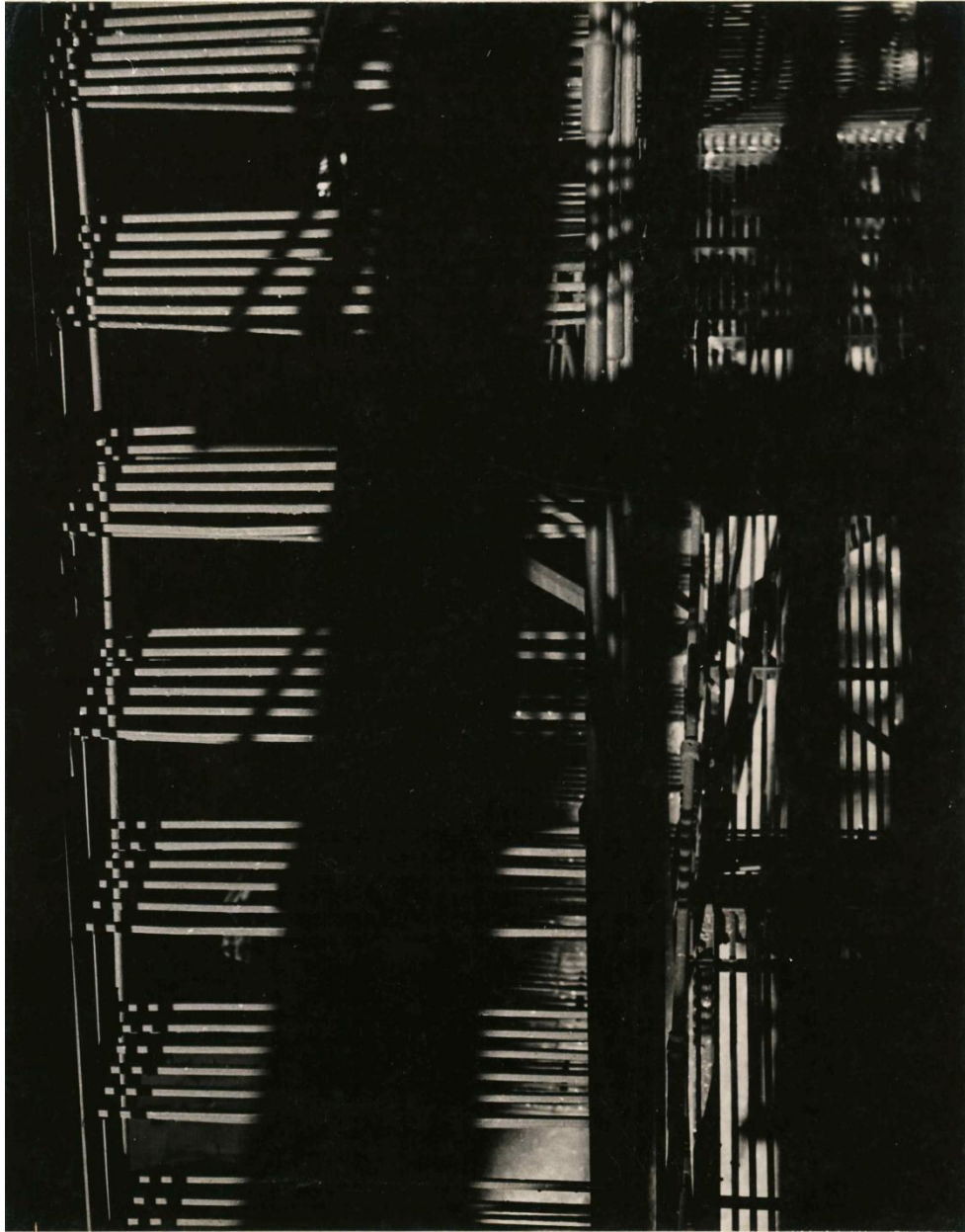


Figure 1.4



Yokoyama Matsusaburō, *Katsuramiya Oniwa Mae* (In front of the garden of Katsura Imperial Palace), 1872, stereocard

Figure 1.5



Ishimoto Yasuhiro, *Untitled*, c. 1951



Figure 1.6



Ishimoto Yasuhiro, *Untitled*, c. 1954

Figure 1.7



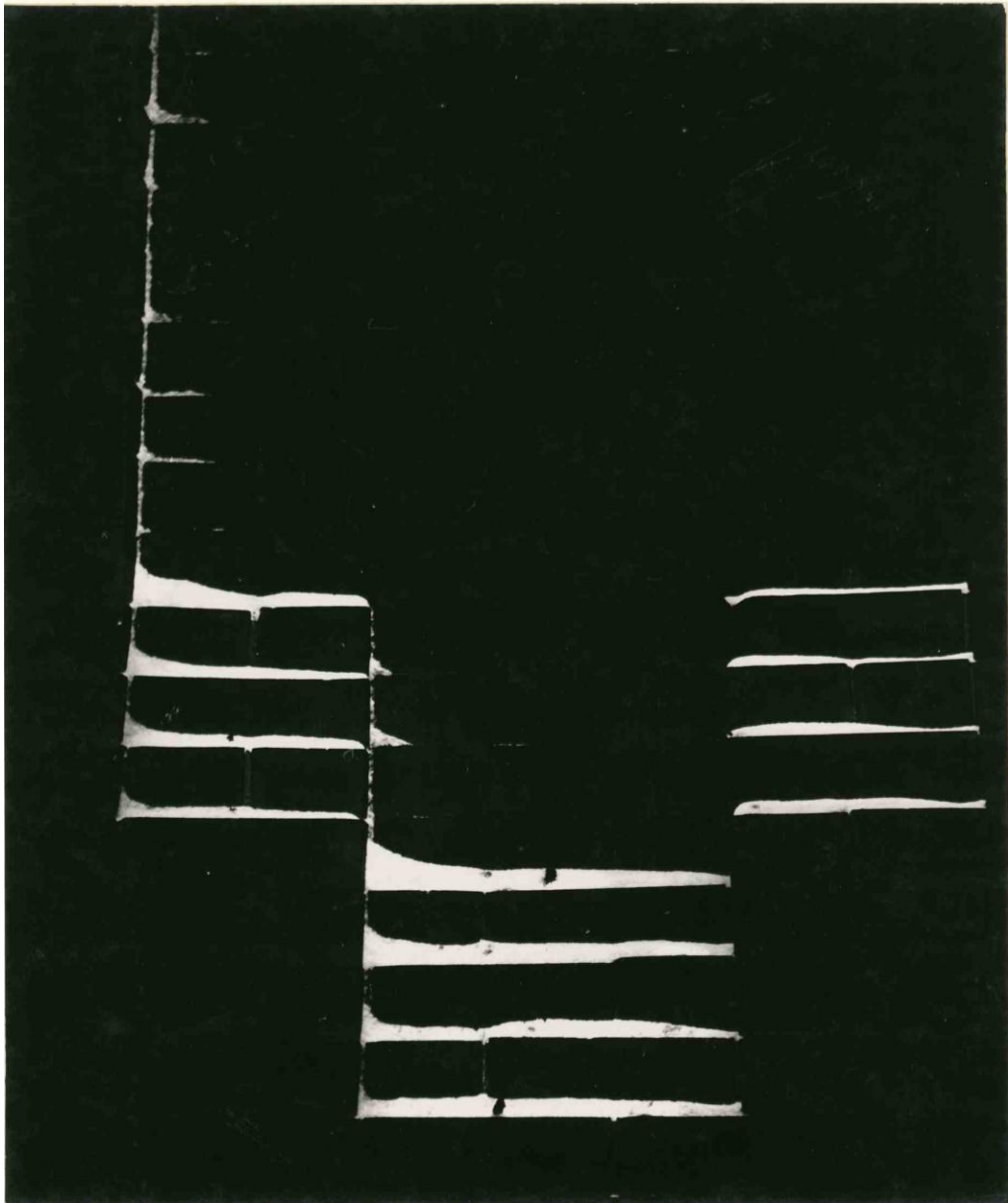
Ishimoto Yasuhiro, *Untitled*, c. 1951

Figure 1.8



Ishimoto Yasuhiro, *Untitled*, c. 1951

Figure 1.9



Ishimoto Yasuhiro, *Untitled*, c. 1951

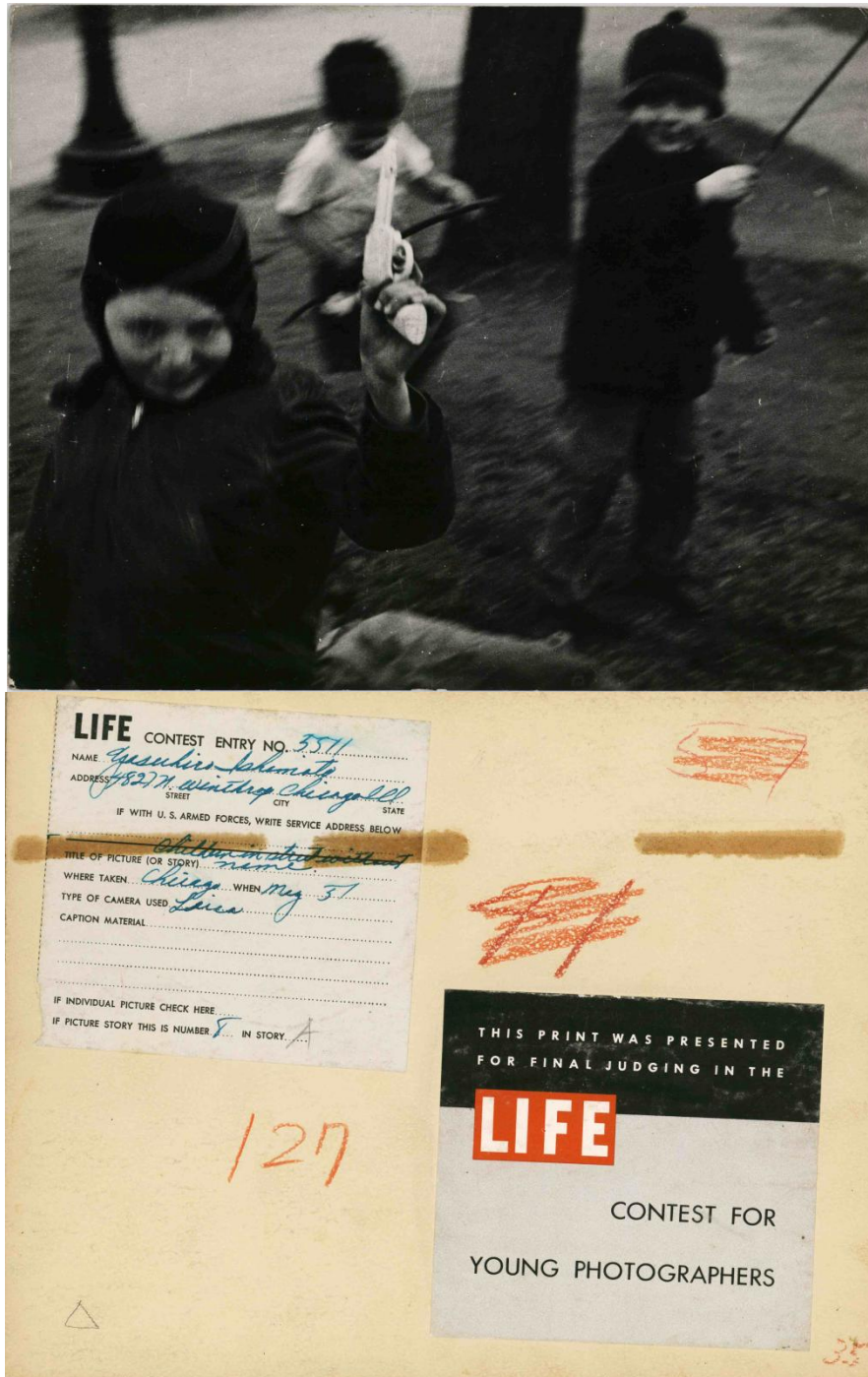
Figure 1.10



Harry Callahan, *Weeds in Snow*, Detroit, 1943



Figure 1.11



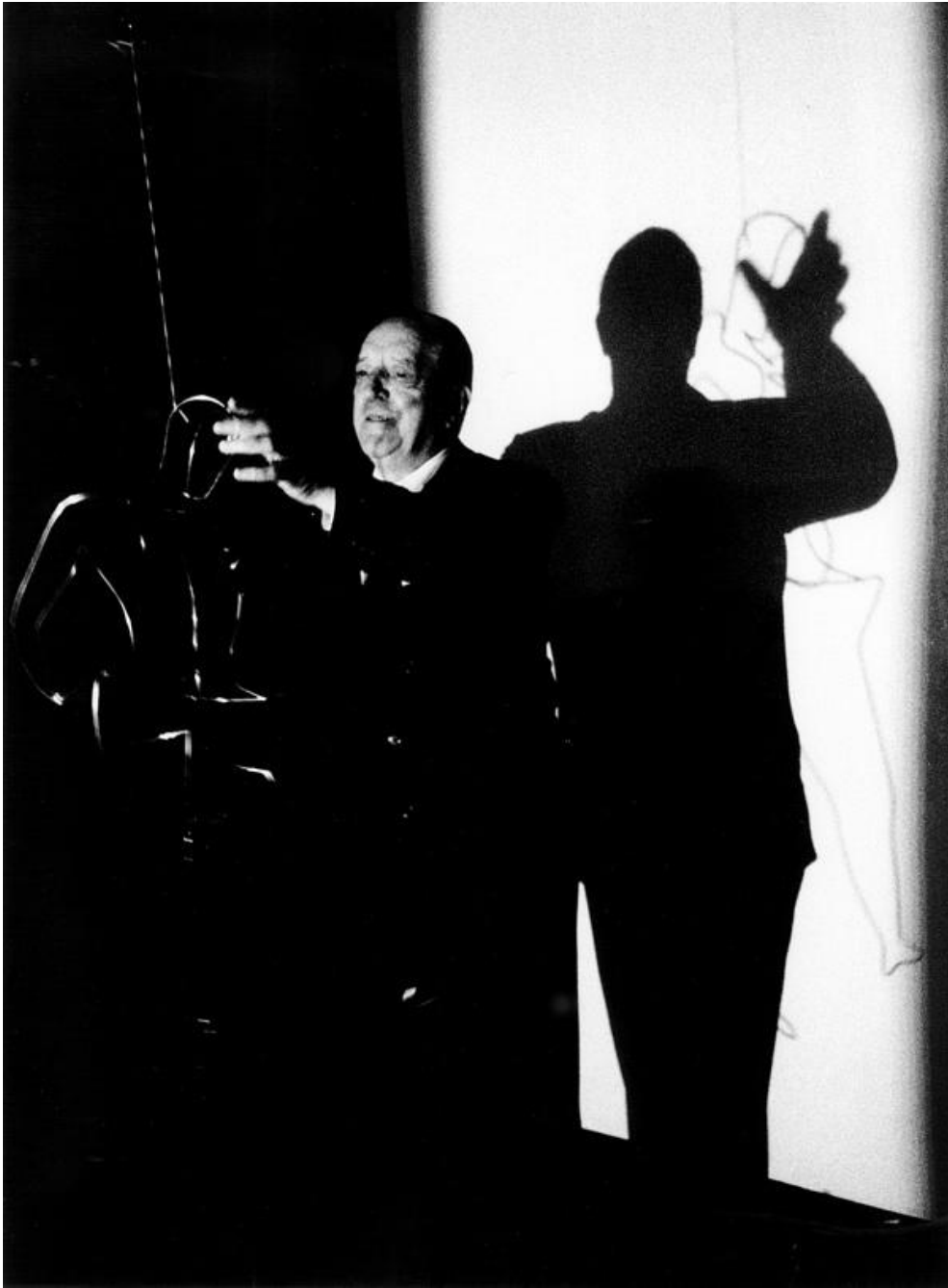
Front and back of Ishimoto's photograph included in his portfolio for the 1950 *Life* young photographers contest

Figure 1.12



Ishimoto Yasuhiro, *Untitled*, c. 1951, shown in *The Family of Man*

Figure 1.13



Ishimoto Yasuhiro, *Untitled* (Mies van der Rohe), c. 1951

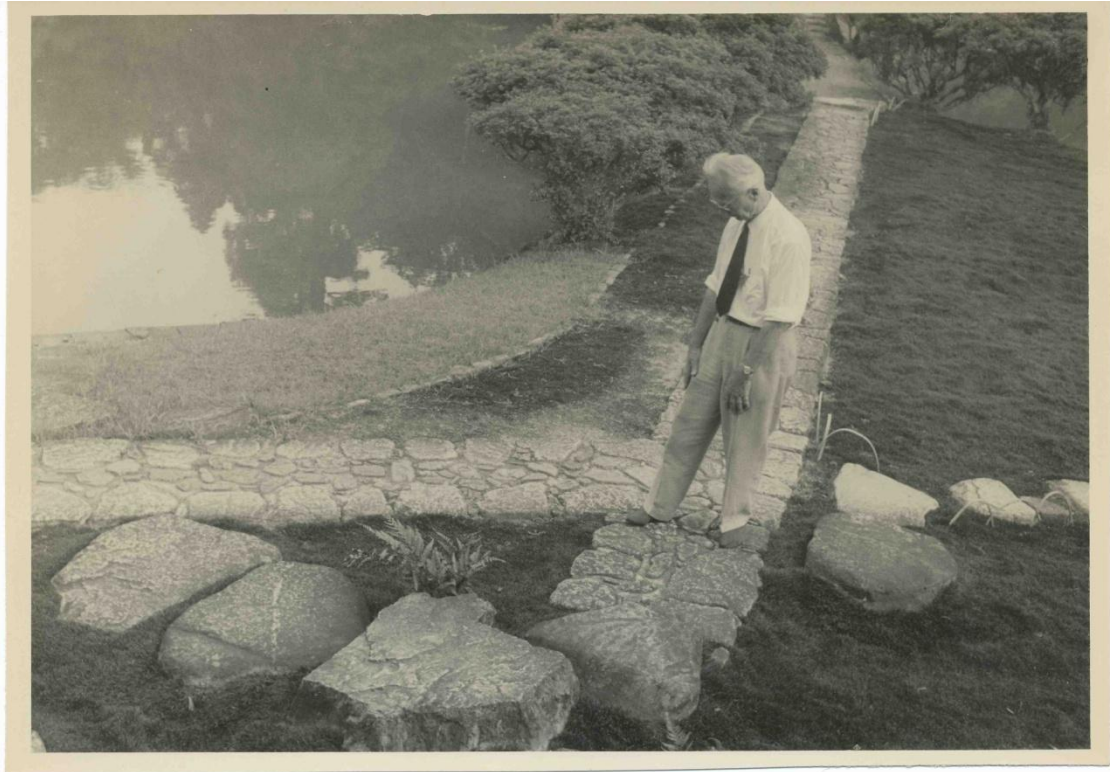


Figure 1.14



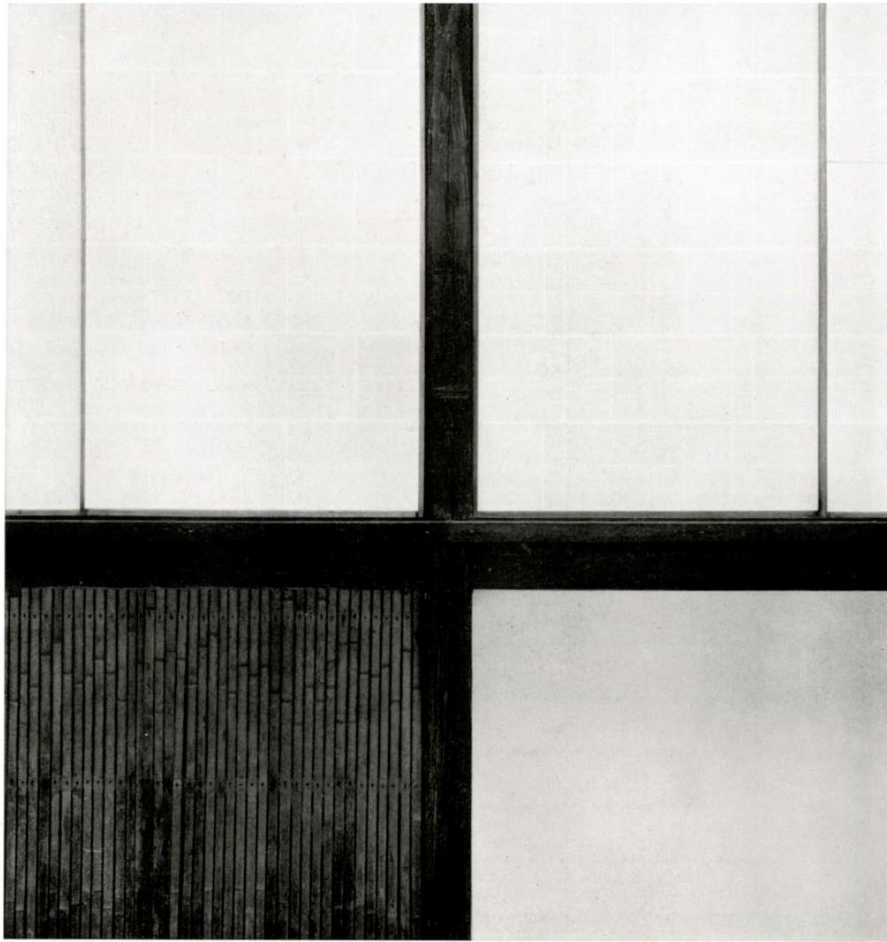
Ishimoto Yasuhiro, *Untitled* (Lake Shore Drive Apartments), c. 1951

Figure 1.15



Unknown photographer, *Untitled* (Edward Steichen at Katsura), c. 1956

Figure 1.16



Detail of the New Palace

From *Katsura* (1960) showing Ishimoto Yasuhiro's photograph 1954 captioned  
"Detail of the New Palace"

Figure 1.17



Unknown photographer, *Untitled* (Ishimoto Yasuhiro, Tange Kenzo, and Kato Toshiko), c. 1956



Figure 1.18



Ishimoto Yasuhiro, *Untitled* (Camp Amache, Colorado), c. 1944

Figure 1.19



Unknown photographer, *Untitled* (Tange Kenzo and Okamoto Taro in discussion at the Japan Design Committee), c.1954

Figure 1.20



Unknown photographer, *Untitled* (Tange Kenzo at Katsura), c. 1955

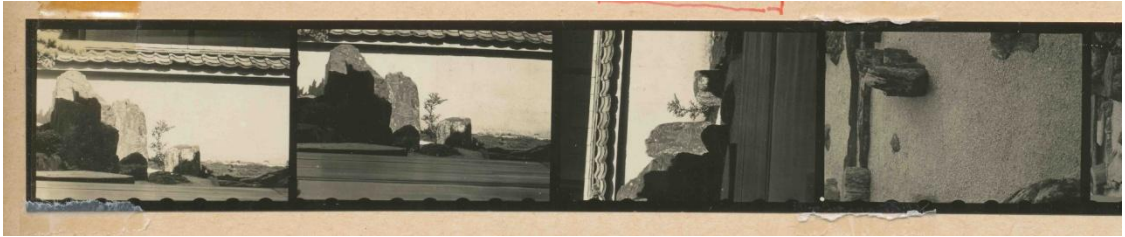
Figure 1.21



Tange Kenzo, contact strip images of Ryoanji, Kyoto, c. 1955



Figure 1.22



Tange Kenzo, contact strip images of Daisen-in, Kyoto, c. 1955

Figure 1.23



Tange Kenzo, contact strip images of Katsura, Kyoto, c. 1952

Figure 1.24



Southeast view of the veranda and Moon-viewing Platform with the Old Shoin

From *Katsura* (1960) showing Ishimoto Yasuhiro's 1954 photograph captioned "Southeast view of the Veranda and Moon-viewing Platform with the Old Shoin"

Figure 1.25  
Tange Kenzo, contact strip image of Katsura, Kyoto, c. 1952

Figure 1.26



Tange Kenzo, contact strip images of Katsura, Kyoto, 1955

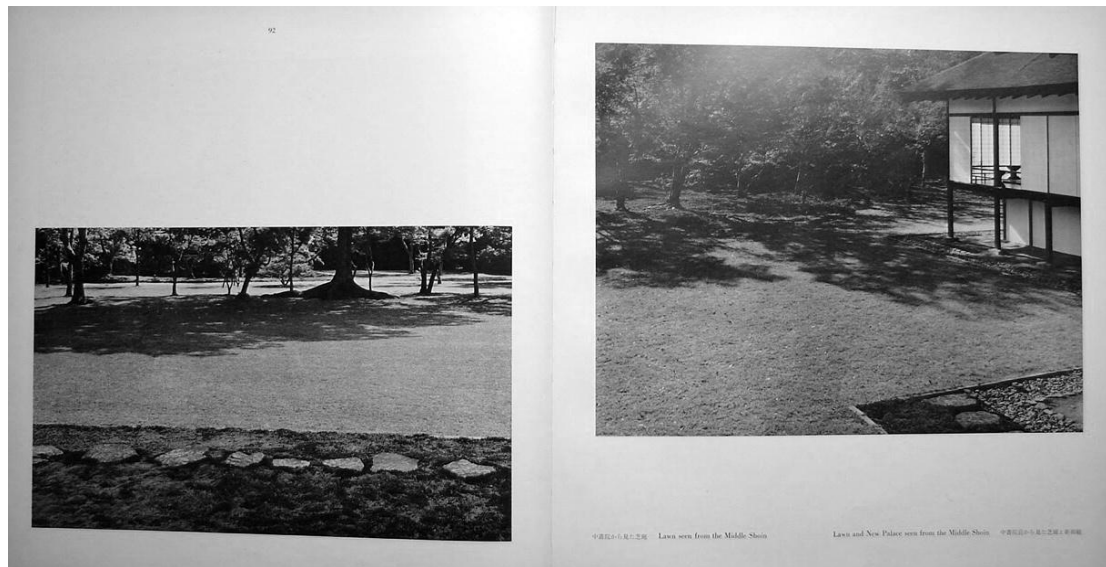
Figure 1.27



Tange Kenzo, contact strip images of Katsura, Kyoto, 1955



Figure 1.28



From *Katsura* (1960) showing Ishimoto Yasuhiro's 1954 photographs captioned  
“Lawn seen from the Middle Shoin” and “Lawn and New Palace seen from the Middle  
Shoin”

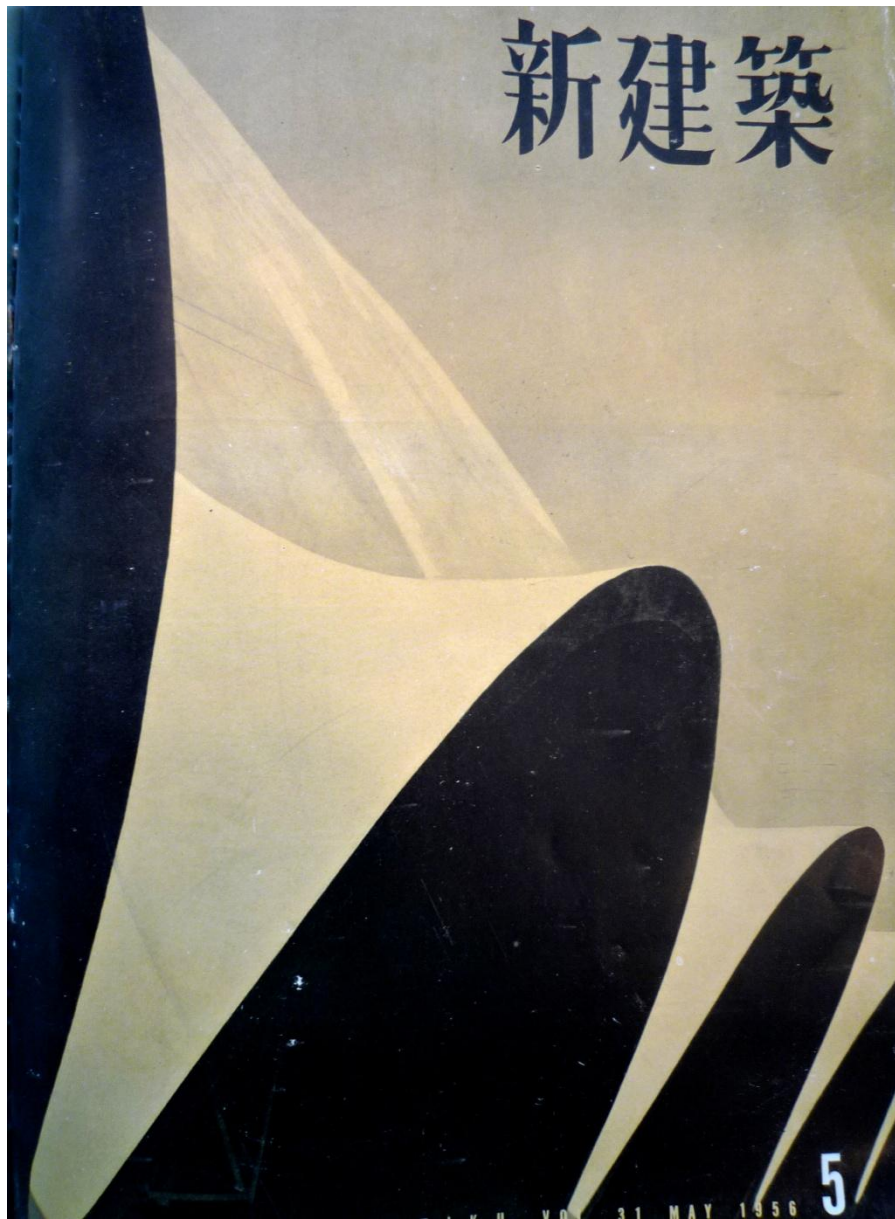
Figure 1.29



Unknown photographer, *Untitled* (The Tanges, the Gropiuses, and the Nouses in Miyajima, Hiroshima), 1954

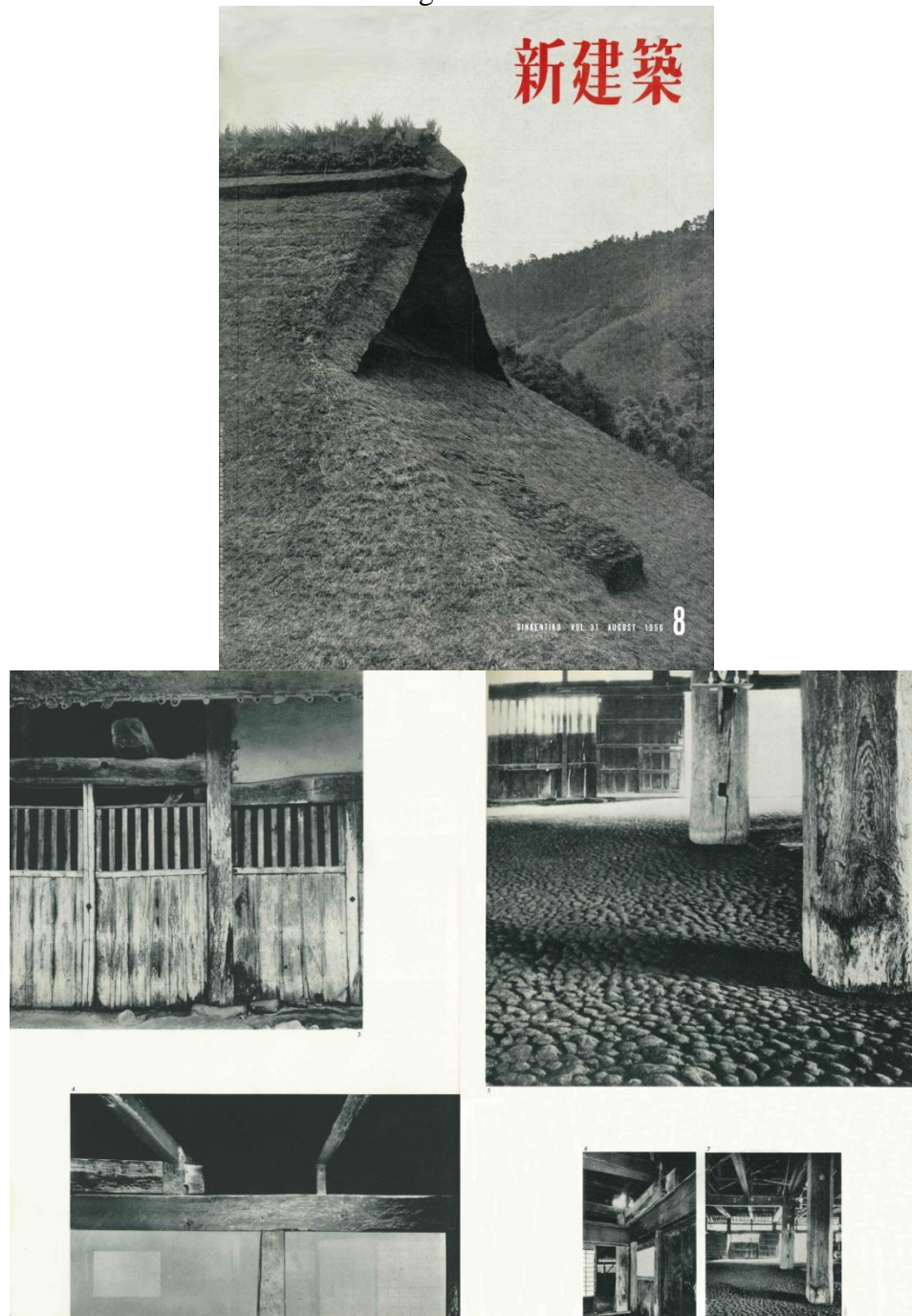


Figure 1.30



Cover of the May issue of *Shinkenchiku*

Figure 1.31



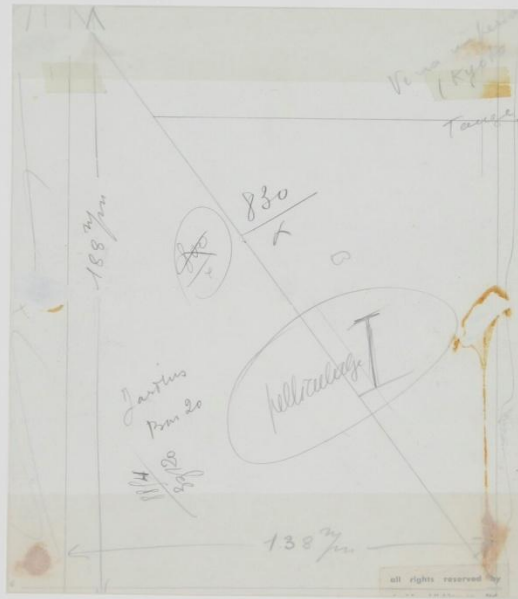
The August 1956 issue of *Shinkenchiku* showing the cover and photographs by Ishimoto Yasuhiro illustrating Shirai Seiichi's essay "About Things Jomonesque"

Figure. 1.32



From *Katsura* (1960) showing photographs titled “Jomon: Clay figurine and Mirror with house design,” and “Yayoi Haniwa”

Figure 1.33



Reverse of a photograph by Ishimoto Yasuhiro prepared for the 1960 publication  
*Katsura*, c. 1954

Figure 1.34



Ishimoto Yasihiro, untiled prints, c. 1954, prepared for the 1960 publication *Katsura*, shown with and without tracing paper marked with cropping instructions and also from the reverse



Figure 1.35



Ishimoto Yasuhiro, untiled prints, c. 1954, prepared for the 1960 publication *Katsura*, shown with and without tracing paper marked with cropping instructions

Figure 1.36



Ishimoto Yasihiro, untiled prints, c. 1954, prepared for the 1960 publication *Katsura*, shown with and without tracing paper marked with cropping instructions

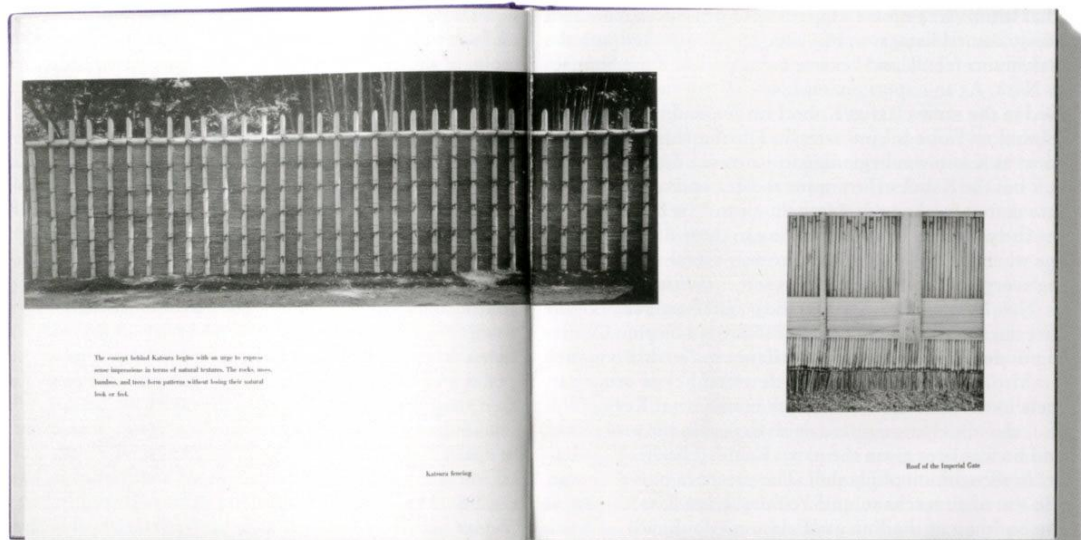
Figure 1.37



Title page of *Katsura* (1960)

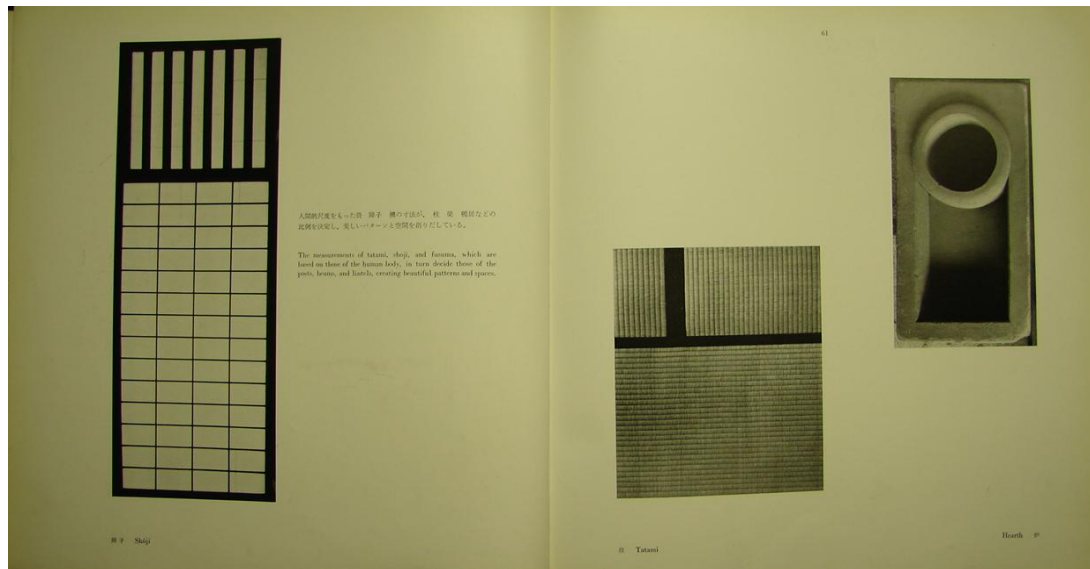


Figure 1.38



Spread from *Katsura* (1960) showing Ishimoto Yasihiro's 1954 photograph captioned "Katsura fencing" and "Roof of the Imperial Garden"

Figure 1.39



Spread from *Katsura* (1960) showing Ishimoto Yasuhiro's 1954 photograph captioned "Shoji," "Tatami," and "Hearth"

Figure 1.40



Page from *Katsura* (1960) showing Ishimoto Yasuhiro's 1954 photographs captioned "Rock," "Lawn," "Shrub Fence," and "Pond"

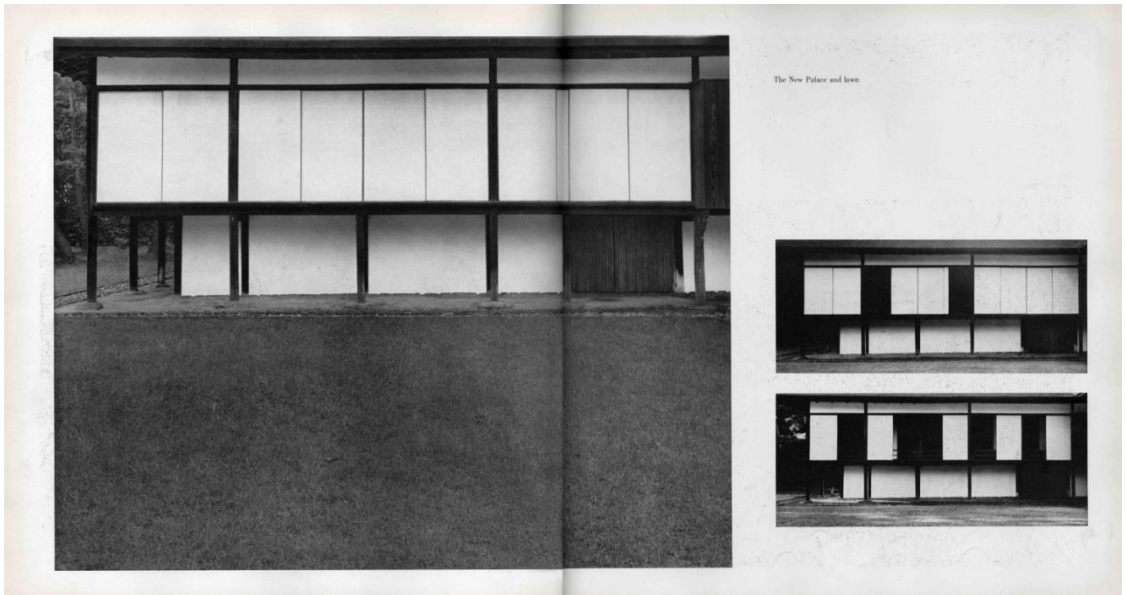
Figure 1.41



Rock arrangement near the Moon-viewing Platform

From *Katsura* (1960) showing Ishimoto Yasuhiro's 1954 photographs captioned  
"Rock arrangement near the Moon-viewing Platform"

Figure 1.42



From *Katsura* (1960) showing Ishimoto Yasuhiro's 1954 photographs captioned "The New Palace and lawn"

Figure 1.43



Ishimoto Yasuhiro, *Untitled*, from the series *Katsura*, 1954

Figure 1.44



From *Katsura* (1960) showing Ishimoto Yasuhiro's 1954 photographs captioned  
"Gepparo, fusuma, shoji"



Figure 1.45



Ishimoto Yasuhiro, *Untitled*, from the series *Katsura*, 1954



Figure 1.46



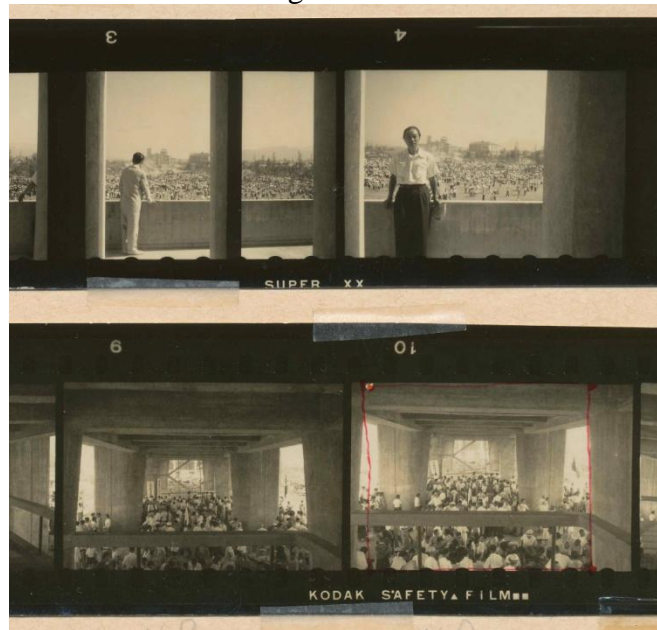
From *Katsura* (1960) showing Ishimoto Yasuhiro's 1954 photograph captioned  
"Vicinity of the Central Gate"

Figure 1.47



Ishimoto Yasuhiro, *Untitled* (Hiroshima Peace Memorial Center), c. 1955

Figure 1.48



Tange Kenzo, contact strip images of Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum, August 5, 1955

Figure 1.49



Ishimoto Yasuhiro's 1954 photograph captioned "Rock arrangement at the Central Gate" as it appeared in *Katsura* (1960)

Figure 1.50



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Stone Pavement of the Inner Gate, Natural Stone and Ashlar Pavings

Ishimoto Yasuhiro, *Stone Pavement of the Inner Gate and Asher Pavings*, 1981



Figure 1.51



Ishimoto Yasuhiro, *Stepping stones toward the Music Room, the Middle Shoin , and the New Palace*, 1981

Figure 1.52



Ishimoto Yasuhiro, *Interior of the Old Shoin, Viewed from the Veranda Room*, 1981



Figure 1.53



Ishimoto Yasuhiro, *Imperial Dais and the Katura Shelves at the Southwest Corner of the First Room of the New Palace*, 1981



## CHAPTER 2

### *METABOLISM: PROPOSAL FOR A NEW URBANISM*

#### AND THE AUGUST 1955 ISSUE OF THE ARCHITECTURE JOURNAL

#### *SHINKENCHIKU*

Ceaselessly the river flows, and yet the water is never the same, while in the still pools the shifting foam gathers and is gone, never staying for a moment. Even so is man and his habitation.<sup>164</sup>

--Kamo no Chōmei (1153 or 1155-1216)

This chapter will primarily focus on two publications closely associated with the endeavors of Japan's first postwar avant-garde architectural design collective, Metabolism. The first publication is the collective's 1960 manifesto, entitled *Metabolism: Proposal for a New Urbanism* (Figure. 2.1), and the second is the August 1955 issue of the architecture journal *Shinkenchiku* (Figure. 2.2), an inspirational printed and circulated source for both the textual and visual materials for the collective's seven members. Positioning a thin and inexpensively produced black and white pamphlet of eighty-eight pages as a venue to express its vast and ambitious ideas about the ideal city, the collective manifested in the slim volume its own unique methodologies, fully utilizing visual materials such as photographs, drawings and illustrations. Earlier, the August 1955 issue of *Shinkenchiku* (the editor of which, Kawazoe Noboru, was the theoretical leader of the collective) celebrated the tenth year anniversary of Japan's reconstruction efforts. With effective use of photography, the issue navigates the complex narratives not only of the nation's seemingly successful recovery but also its failures and anxieties over a potential nuclear war. At the end of

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<sup>164</sup> Kamo no Chōmei, "The Hōjōki," *The Ten Foot Square Hut and Tales of the Heike*, trans. A. L. Sadler (Rutland, VT, Tuttle Book, 1972), 1.

this chapter, I will discuss a third publication—this one by Tange and his handpicked team of graduate students from the University of Tokyo—<sup>165</sup> entitled *A Plan for Tokyo, 1960: Towards a Structural Reorganization* (Figure. 2.3). Both of the 1960 publications are merely slender, modest-sized pamphlets, but they were filled with new and important ideas for urbanism in Tokyo, the nation's capital almost completely destroyed fifteen years earlier. This chapter positions these small but influential publications with radical design concepts as a catalyst for Japan's postwar utopian urbanism in their visions as intermediated through visual materials and compressed in a magazine format. Such practices can be found in the genealogy of the visual strategy developed by Tange Kenzō in the 1960 photo book by Ishimoto Yasuhiro, *Katsura*, the subject of Chapter 1. All three publications under discussion in this chapter are noted for their extensive and imaginative use of photographs and other graphic materials, and were circulated extensively among selected audiences, both domestically and internationally. Moreover, they formed a lasting impact in the field of urbanism in the years to come.

My main arguments in this chapter are as follows: the architects at issue, setting out to create imaginary city plans suited to postwar Japan, as well as reflecting the recent history of the nation's reconstruction and recovery efforts, resorted to photography as a significant and democratic base material. One example is of the photographs of what came to be known as *yakeato*, a term uniquely coined in the immediate postwar years to signify the burnt fields where a large city used to stand. The term is particularly visual and is deeply and instantly connected to the consciousness of numerous Japanese citizens who lived in postwar urban spaces that

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<sup>165</sup> The Tange team for the 1960 Tokyo plan consisted of Kamiya Kōji (who later designed the Expo 70's space frame structure), Isozaki Arata, Watanabe Sadao, Kurokawa Yukinori (also known as Kurokawa Kishō, he was a member of the collective Metabolism), and Kō Keiki.

had faced bombings or air raids. (Hearing the term, such citizens would immediately imagine the photograph of a burnt city.) It is an archetypical landscape (*genfūkei*) of postwar Japan, and it is allegorical, referring to the city's ephemeral nature and circular life. The photographs of the completely burnt and collapsed cities (such as Tokyo and Hiroshima) were used over and over again in publications in postwar Japan as a reminder of the beginning of the nation's postwar urban development, *tabula rasa*. The most notable example of such an image (Figure. 2.4) was the aerial photograph of downtown Tokyo, seen in the August 1955 issue of the journal, *Shinkenchiku*. Through a handful of well-circulated Japanese architectural journals, such as *Shinkenchiku* (and its English version, *The Japan Architect*), *Kokusai kenchiku* and *Kenchiku bunka*, the images of *yakeato* collectively contributed to the creation of an image-based discourse of theories and methodologies for the formation of Japan's postwar utopian urbanism. An excellent example of such a formation is Metabolism and its 1960 manifesto. (The collective's members first considered naming their group, "Burnt Ash School," which refers to *yakeato*.<sup>166</sup>) Additionally, I will argue that the democratic and plastic characteristics of photography, with its ample availability in printed media to anyone, as well as its flexibility to be manipulated through simple cutting, pasting, and collaging, allowed architects, artists and editors to treat the medium as a springboard for their flexible and imaginative formation of ideas regarding the city.

Finally, I will argue that the images of *yakeato* reinforced the awareness in architects of the possibility of a nuclear war that could completely level a city and thus enhanced their desire for a system to create cities capable of surviving such a catastrophe. In this connection, a dialogue between the architect Asada Takashi<sup>167</sup> and

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<sup>166</sup> Yatsuka Hajime, and Yoshimatsu Hideki, *Metabolism: 1960 nendai Nihon no kenchiku avan garudo* (Metabolism: the 1960s avant-garde of Japanese architecture), (Tokyo: Inax Shuppan, 11-18).

<sup>167</sup> Asada Takashi is an uncle of literary critic Asada Akira.

the physicist Takeya Mitsuo in the aforementioned *Shinkenchiku* issue of August 1955, which stressed the importance of interdisciplinary collaboration and the responsibility of architects to rebuild civilization in harmony with nature, served as a crucial intellectual trigger for Asada to see an indisputable merit in organizing a group like Metabolism. Importantly, Asada and Takeya's printed dialogue was crowned with a dozen photographs that effectively spoke to their readers, not only amplifying the arguments but also hinting at the possibility of a nuclear war in which a reconstructed city could once again vanish under nuclear assault.

### **The Beginning**

At the end of the violent war where we daily faced death, we witnessed the collapse of the military dictatorship of Japan and Germany. Soon after that, there followed the merit competition between the Communism of the USSR and the democracy of the US, a schism that was then brought, as is, to the postwar political system of Japan. Because of that, under the US occupation, the streets were uproarious with (student) demonstrations espousing socialism and with the noise from right-wing propaganda cars opposing the students.<sup>168</sup>

Ōtaka Masato

In spring 1960, in the same year *Katsura* was finally published, the streets in Tokyo were again set on fire. This time they were filled with collisions between student protestors and government authorities, including the Japan Self Defense Force,

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<sup>168</sup> Ōtaka Masato, "Metaborisuto tachi to manande hajimeta Nihon no machizukuri to kenchiku" (Making of Japanese cities and architecture, which I began after studying with Metabolists), in *Metaborizumu to Metaborisuto tachi* (Metabolism and Metabolists), ed. Ōtaka Masato, and Kawazoe Noboru (Tokyo: Bijutsu Shuppansha, 2005), 48.

over the forced ratification of the Japan-US Security Treaty by the House of Councillors on May 19, 1960. (The treaty had been signed by the two nations earlier in January.) On June 15, the student protestors, many of whom belonged to the Zengakuren (All-Japan Federation of the Student Self-Government Association), forcefully entered the National Diet compound, where the protestors clashed fiercely with the police force, resulting in the killing of at least one protestor and the injury of hundreds. The city once again had become a battlefield. Indeed, 1960 marked the largest shift in politics in postwar Japan, beginning in January with a labor dispute at the Mitsui Miike mine in Kyushu. The dispute at the mine developed into an indefinite strike that reinforced a shift in Japan's general energy source, from coal to oil, a shift that later supported the nation's miraculous industrialization realized throughout the 1960s.

With such a radical shift in politics, economic growth was the nation's top priority during the 1950s and 1960s. After the Korean War began in 1950, the Allied Forces used Japan as their military base as well as a source of supplies, which boosted Japan's export-oriented economy. When the new security treaty became effective on June 19, 1960, the incumbent Kishi Nobusuke cabinet (the 57<sup>th</sup> prime minister) resigned entirely, causing the installation of the Ikeda Hayato cabinet (the 58<sup>th</sup> prime minister). The new cabinet under the leadership of Prime Minister Ikeda, former minister of MITI, placed utmost emphasis on the nation's economy, and the government undertook an ambitious "Income-Doubling Plan" (*shotoku baizō keikaku*) that launched the "High Economic Growth Period" (*kōdo keizai seichō jidai*) of the next ten years.<sup>169</sup> For example, Ikeda lowered interest rates and taxes in order to stimulate spending.

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<sup>169</sup> The previous period of rapid economic growth between 1955 and 1961 paved the way for the 1960s, often called the "Golden Sixties," the second decade that is generally associated with the Japanese economic miracle. In 1965, Japan's nominal

The resulting economic growth caused an unprecedented construction boom and accelerated metropolitan expansion. Tokyo became the engine of this economic miracle. People moved to the capital from all over the country, forming a new wave of metropolitan population growth. The late 1950s saw the beginning of suburbanization in Japan, in which the outer circles of Tokyo absorbed most of the population increase. The outskirts of the Greater Tokyo area were further pushed, creating many satellite bed-town communities and generating ample design opportunities. During this boom period, a common vision of the city was that it should grow beyond Tokyo Bay, along the coasts of the Pacific Ocean. From 1955 to 1964, the total population of the Tokyo metropolitan region rose from 13.28 to 18.86 million. As historian Zhongjie Lin points out, a significant transformation of the city's spatial structure accompanied this population explosion. Instead of the concentration of business functions in a single core, a polycentric pattern came into being, with a number of mass traffic nodes emerging as new business and commercial centers, such as Shinjuku, Shibuya, and Ikebukuro.<sup>170</sup> The 1964 Tokyo Olympic games, the first Olympic game to be held in Asia, promoted urban regeneration further.

Amid the nation's unprecedented economic and urban growth as well as the political chaos, and immediately before the security treaty was ratified, the World Design Conference (WoDeCo) was held in Tokyo 11-16 May 1960.<sup>171</sup> The conference

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GDP was estimated at just over \$91 billion. By 1980, the nominal GDP had soared to a record \$1.065 trillion. The record economic growth commenced in earnest in 1955 and continued into the 1970s with more than 10% annual growth of the GNP. Zhongjie Lin, *Kenzō Tange and the Metabolist Movement* (New York and London: Routledge, 2010), 136.

<sup>170</sup> Lin, 137.

<sup>171</sup> The 1960 WoDeCo was conceived by industrial designer Yanagi Sōri, who had attended the 1956 conference in Aspen, Colorado. (At the earlier conference, Yanagi was entrusted with Ishimoto's photos of Katsura by Tange Kenzō so that he could show them to Herbert Bayer.) As soon as he returned to Tokyo, he created the 1960 conference preparation office at the Japan Good Design Committee (where Tange

gave not only visibility to the field of architecture and urbanism in general in Japan but also a chance for younger Japanese architects to learn from the participants and present their novel ideas to the audience. (The conference took place at Sankei Hall in the Ōtemachi part of downtown Tokyo, near the Imperial Palace and the National Diet Building, just blocks from the street conflicts and collisions. The conference was somewhat overshadowed by the chaos on the national political scene and in the streets; the unexpectedly small audience at the opening ceremony only filled one third of the auditorium.) The conference was organized around the theme, “A Total Image of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century: What Might Designers Contribute to Future Societies?,”<sup>172</sup> with participants interpreting the theme broadly to interrogate over the course of three days the possible roles of design and architects/designers responding to changing environments in their postwar societies.<sup>173</sup> In particular, the issues of personality, practicability, and possibility were discussed in relation to the theme.

The conference brought together for the first time in Japan a substantial number of the world’s top-rated architects and industrial and graphic designers. The impressive list of participants included Herbert Bayer (who designed the cover and other aspects of the book *Katsura*), Louis Kahn, Paul Rudolf, Minoru Yamazaki, Peter and Alison Smithon, Ralph Erskine, and Jean Prouvé, to name a few, although most of

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Kenzō, Okamoto Tarō, Kamekura Yūsaku and Ishimoto Yasuhiro were members, among others). Yanagi first approached industry groups, such as the Japan Architecture Association and the Japan Industrial Designer’s Association (JIDA). But because he requested that corporate in-house designers not to join the conference, JIDA decided against participating, a decision that later forced Yanagi to resign from the office. As a result, the Japan Good Design Committee and several architects took the initiative to organize the conference. Yatsuka Hajime, and Yoshimatsu Hideki, 10-11.

<sup>172</sup> World Design Conference 1960 in Tokyo, ed. The World Design Conference Organization (Tokyo: Bijutsu Shuppansha, 1960), 13.

<sup>173</sup> Hamamura Jun, “Sekai dezain kaigi o oete” (After the World Design Conference) in *Bijutsu techō* (July, 1960), 32.

the influential foreign architects in Japan up to then, such as Le Corbusier and Mies van der Rohe, were not present.<sup>174</sup> (The total number of attendants was 227, among whom were 143 Japanese and 84 non-Japanese designers from twenty-six countries.) The conference was organized by a group of young architects, headed by the architect Asada Takashi, the conference's Secretary General, who was Tange's staff architect as well as the behind-the-scenes organizing force of the collective, Metabolism.

Part of the conference was focused on the issue of technology and the notion of "tradition." There was also recognition among participating architects that there had been a shift in the driving force behind design, from "machinery" to "life," "science" and "environments." For example, Herbert Bayer and Jean Prouvé discussed respectively the social position of the designer in the age of mass production, and the need for putting advanced scientific results at the general practical service of design. Kamekura Yūsaku declared that "tradition must be resolved and newly constructed" in response to environmental shifts in a new design culture.<sup>175</sup> Having recognized the shift in design from Functionalism to Structuralism, Peter Smithon stated, "[When] we build, it is not enough to consider merely the conditions under the necessary function; it is further necessary to think of the influence which it will have on its surroundings and its mutual interrelations with these surroundings."<sup>176</sup> Smithon's statement led the Metabolists to reconsider their idea of the city as both a process and as part of nature, that is to say, as something that metabolizes and metamorphoses in close relation to its surroundings.

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<sup>174</sup> Ibid.

<sup>175</sup> "World Design Conference" in the news and comment section, *The Japan Architect* 45, nos. 7-164 (Tokyo: Shinkenchikusha, 1960), unpaginated.

<sup>176</sup> Ibid.



## The Collective, Metabolism

Coinciding with the organizational preparation of the WoDeCo in 1959, the members of Metabolism chose the form of collectivism to share concerns and develop methodologies for creating a new system to envision the city in postwar Japan.

Collectivism meant to them the freedom to assemble, to discuss freely a wide range of subjects related to modernity, design and urbanism in specific postwar conditions, and to collaborate on projects to realize their discussions. During the wartime reign of imperial fascism, these activities were often prohibited or limited. Metabolism was formed under the leadership of the architect and theorist Asada Takashi, with the following four architects, two graphic designers, and one architectural critic as its members: the architects Kikutake Kiyonori (b. 1928), Ōtaka Masato (1923-2010), Maki Fumihiko (b. 1928), and Kurokawa Kishō (1934-2006), the graphic designers Ekuan Kenji (b. 1929) and Awazu Kiyoshi (1929-2008), and the critic Kawazoe Noboru (b. 1925). Among the seven members of the collective, three of the five architects were trained by or affiliated with Tange Kenzō. Kawazoe was Tange's ally in the field of architectural criticism, having written extensively on the architect's work and edited his first monograph.

Anticipating that Japanese cities would grow to become mega-size, Metabolism advocated the creation of a new structural system to develop the city, utilizing the most advanced technology and materials available at that time.<sup>177</sup> (Such technology included a massive use of reinforced concrete.) In their view the traditional laws of form and function, such as those promoted by the CIAM, were becoming

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<sup>177</sup> Maki, borrowing an observation by historian Joan Ockman made in *Architecture Culture 1943-1968*, commented later that Metabolism's proposals that combined technology and symbolism in architectural forms were more specific than other utopian proposals advanced up to that time. Fumihiko Maki, *Nurturing Dreams* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2008), 29.

obsolete in sickened, overcrowded and mutating cities like Tokyo. The young Metabolists believed that new laws of space and functional transformation, supported by the history of Japanese architecture and the latest technology, would be essential in helping the city to further grow. But they were aware that these laws, not to mention the selection and application of materials, would need to be different from those found in the West, where architecture is often monumental and considered permanent and eternal. For example, they were aware that their choice of concrete megastructures, which could be interpreted simply as brutalist, would not only contrast with Western expectations of Japanese modern architecture—“a spare, Miesian contribution of the austere native tradition of domestic simplicity”<sup>178</sup>—but also give themselves a chance to construe concrete megastructures as Jōmonesque, an expression supported by the vital and dynamic, prehistorical Japanese spirit cultivated in the ongoing tradition discourse. As historian Cherie Wendelken argues, the Metabolist interpretation of modern Western architecture and its own history and architectural tradition was heavily fraught, in both the political and architectural sense.<sup>179</sup> On this, she states that “[t]he ultimate objective of the group was to address fundamental questions about what it meant to be Japanese in the postwar world,” by creating independently their own designs and design theories while being aware of the global trend.<sup>180</sup> With their memories still fresh of the devastation of Japanese cities at the end of the war, they urgently felt the need to create a new system to conceive, maintain, grow, and even survive a city in the event of a nuclear war. The photographic images of destroyed and

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<sup>178</sup> Reyner Banham, *Megastructure: Urban Futures of the Recent Past* (New York: Harper & Row, 1976), 46.

<sup>179</sup> Cherie Wendelken, “Putting Metabolism Back in Place: The Making of a Radically Decontextualized Architecture in Japan” in *Anxious Modernism*, ed. Sarah Williams Goldhagen and Rejean Legault (Montreal: Canadian Center for Architecture, and Cambridge: MIT Press, 2000), 280.

<sup>180</sup> *Ibid.*

burnt cities, such as Hiroshima and Tokyo, were constant reminders of their ground zero, which not only motivated them to formulate the system but also kept them aware that the city was an organic and living entity. The Metabolists argued that cities, which consist of residents and buildings, are a single living organ, impermanent, and always in flux; they are “the sheddable shell of underlying cultural processes that could be expressed in any material, at any scale.”<sup>181</sup>

The young architects pursued further Tange’s interest in technology as a tool to dissect and deconstruct the notion of tradition. But unlike Tange, whose career began during the war in support of the fascist government, they did not need either to justify their previous position or maintain it, but rather were able to interpret tradition freely in the postwar environment, where the nationalistic notion of tradition was being reconstructed under the Allied Forces’ occupation and reconstruction efforts. For example, the Metabolists did not deal with the notoriously eclectic “imperial crown” style (*teikan yōshiki*) that had emerged in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, while more senior architects had found it to be a compromise between the Modernist and the Japanese vernacular. Their inspirations were not only Le Corbusier, but also post-CIAM architects, such as Louis Kahn, whose design of the Philadelphia City Tower was influential among young Japanese architects and who visited Tokyo for the design conference. With this background, the young Japanese architects attempted, in their application of the latest technology for the purpose of structuring a new architecture and a new city, to reinterpret the embodiment of the Japanese tradition. Such awareness was evident in Ōtaka’s design, for the architect Maekawa Kunio, of the Brutalist and multi-storied Harumi Apartment complex (1958) (Figure. 2.5), a reinforced concrete structure in the new landfill in the Bay of Tokyo. Rather than directly relating it to Le Corbusier’s residential housing design principle *Unité*

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<sup>181</sup> Wendelken, 287.

d'Habitation, the young architect acknowledged his lineage to the pre-historical vulgar Jōmon aesthetics that comprised a part of the Japanese tradition discourse. Arguably, the apartment's massive scale and structure presented a prototype for megastructural designs in Japan.<sup>182</sup>

In the minds of the Metabolists, the Japanese conception of city design was fundamentally distinguished from that of the Western city. While the city was an eternal monument in classical Western thought, the Metabolists viewed the city as nature and as a passing and ephemeral life, as seen in the quote of Kamo no Chōmei at the beginning of this chapter. In imagining a future city, Kawazoe argued, “human beings should not stand against nature, nor should architecture and the city. Rather they should become part of nature, obeying the theory of life. And what ought to be considered to be the theory of life is metabolism.”<sup>183</sup>

### **The Formation of the Collective**

The formation of Metabolism was informally initiated by Asada Takashi, who engaged in a dialogue with the physicist Takeya Mitsuo in the August 1955 issue of *Shinkenchiku* and later became the head of the preparation office for the 1960 WoDeCo in Tokyo.<sup>184</sup> (Once the group was formed, he withdrew from it and stayed

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<sup>182</sup> Lin, 41.

<sup>183</sup> Noboru Kawazoe, “Thirty Years of Metabolism,” unpublished thesis, *Wissenschaftliche Zeitschrift der Bauhaus-Universität Weimar* 44 (1988): 147. Also discussed in Lin, 44.

<sup>184</sup> Asada was an extremely interesting architect and critic. As Tange's chief architect, he was the organizer of Konrad Waxman's three-week long seminar in Japan. Running from October to November 1955, the seminar afforded twenty-one architects/designers and students the opportunity to learn about certain aspects of Modernist architecture, including the space frame structure. Among the students were Tange Kenzō, Arata Isozaki, and Ekuan Kenji. Yatsuka and Yoshimatsu, 11. Asada also invented the notion of *kankyō* (environment) as an element of architecture, which later led to the landmark exhibition *From Space to Environment* (*Kūkan kara kankyō e*) in 1966, an exhibition discussed in Chapter 3. When Asada established his design firm in 1961, he

on merely as an advisor; critic Kawazoe Noboru took over as a theoretical leader.) Asada felt that it was necessary for talented emerging architects from Japan to have their voices heard at the world conference. The collective's members therefore hastily prepared a manifesto and personally sold copies of it at the conference.

Asada, a student of, and later the chief architect of the offices of, Tange Kenzō, was concerned about the way Japanese cities had grown erratically and irregularly after the war, and desired to create a comprehensive and socially responsible city renewal plan through the development of criticism and advocacy.<sup>185</sup> The group he organized included young design professionals in their twenties and thirties with different experiences and visions, but they were all concerned about a new methodology to create and develop cities in Japan. Ōtaka was the oldest and most senior in design, and had been the chief architect of the office of architect Maekawa Kunio, the teacher and first employer of Tange Kenzō. In the collective, Kurokawa was youngest, but had represented Japan in 1958 at the International Architecture Student Conference in Leningrad, whereby he was exposed to postwar Russian architecture and Marxist ideology. Neither Tange nor Isozaki Arata was an official member of the group. Isozaki was contemporary to the group architects, and close to them, but he declined the invitation to join the group. (His relationship with Metabolism will be discussed in the next chapter of the dissertation.) Except for Maki, who, after his undergraduate architecture training at the University of Tokyo, was trained in the graduate programs of Cranbrook Academy and later Harvard, all of the collective's members were trained in Japan.

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named it “Kankyō Kaihatsu Sentaa” (environment development center). In 1969, he published *Kankyō kaihatsu ron* (Theory of environmental development) (Tokyo: Kashima Publishing, 1969), and simultaneously he was involved in the initial organizational planning for Expo 70.

<sup>185</sup> *Kankyō kaihatsu ron* demonstrates Asada's critical thoughts in this area.

Tange Kenzō, whose position in architecture and fascism during the war was complex, as discussed in Chapter 1, played a paternal role for the collective, introducing his own projects, such as the Tokyo City Hall and Kagawa Prefectural Office, as well as Kikutake Kiyonori's marine city project at the Otterlo CIAM/Team-X Congress of 1959.<sup>186</sup> His role as a spokesperson for the collective helped disseminate their design ideas outside of Japan.<sup>187</sup>

The collective was rather loosely organized, and there were only a few projects on which some of the collective members collaborated (including an apartment complex designed for those with lower income in Lima, Peru, completed in 1972) but members nevertheless shared some methodological approaches. They were: (1) that artificial building land must be created as a solution to overcrowded cities; and (2) that the various built elements of a city have different natural rates of metabolic change.<sup>188</sup> In addition, I argue that, by embracing technologies and materials recently made available, the members of Metabolism engaged in a discourse of creating an image and progressing it to form and methodology, often elaborately incorporating photography in the drawings so that they conveyed their visions. While imagining a city's new skyline on the imaginary terms of Metabolism, and having seen Tokyo's population overgrowth, they were compelled to mend the city and expand it to open space, such as the ocean and the air, using a sustainable new structure with an unprecedented scale.<sup>189</sup>

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<sup>186</sup> Eric Mumford, *The CIAM Discourse on Urbanism, 1928-1960*, (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2000), 262.

<sup>187</sup> Tange Kenzō indirectly played a major role in forming the collectivism. His head architect/engineer Asada Takashi organized study groups (which later led to the formation of the collective) that often consisted of Kikutake, Kurokawa, Ekuan, Awazu, and Kawazoe.

<sup>188</sup> Banham, 47.

<sup>189</sup> Beginning in the mid 1950s, with the initiation by Kanō Hisaakira, who was the president of the Japan Public Housing Corporation and later became the Governor of Chiba Prefecture (on the other side of Tokyo Bay from Tokyo), a few plans arose to

With the increasing presence of high technology and sources of capital in Japan, the Metabolism members had become aware of the shift in the driving force behind design, from “machinery” to “life.” Unlike the CIAM, which grasped architecture and the city as analogous to machinery, based on the Modernist concept of the Machine Age, the Metabolism architects compared the city with nature, viewing the former as a living organ that moves, grows, transforms, and multiplies rapidly (with the understanding that various parts grow at different paces), while some parts of it would decay and die. Arguably, this shift sprang out of the architects’ visceral and physical experiences of having witnessed the life cycle, that is to say, the collapse and rebirth, of the city through and immediately after the war. Importantly, Le Corbusier’s shift from Functionalism as a principle of his design, to the reference to nature as a mirror of humans for the development of a city, in his Radiant City, was a great inspiration to the collective architects.<sup>190</sup>

This kaleidoscopic experience, like living in a movie or a series and sequence of photographs, led the Metabolists to create a method to address their new vision of a city through the creative use of photographs found in print media, and the transformation of these photographs into a hybrid visual material, such as a photomontage or a collage, through cutting, pasting and drawing thereon or creating a complex design model and photographing it against an elaborately designed

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fill part of Tokyo Bay and expand the land there, including one by Ōtaka, to create a megastructure over Tokyo Bay. Kanō, also as the chair of the governmental Industry Planning Board (Sangyō Keikaku Kaigi), in 1959, drafted the Neo Tokyo Plan, which proposed to fill a third of Tokyo Bay, but it was never realized. Ōtaka and Kawazoe, 13. As a response, Ōtaka proposed in 1959 the Tokyo Bay Marine City Plan, and Tange also proposed the Marine Community for 25,000 inhabitants. In both plans, the architects proposed to build a structure directly from bedrock. These plans should be distinguished from the plan by Kikutake, who in 1958 proposed to create a city that floated on the ocean. Ibid., 14.

<sup>190</sup> Kawazoe Noboru, “Metaborizumu no kiso” (Foundations of Metabolism), *Kindai kenchiku* (Modern architecture), (Tokyo: Kindai Kenchikusha, November 1960), 35.

background with controlled lighting and angles. For example, the then-recently discovered and visualized double-helix structure of DNA (Figure. 2.6) was made into a model and photographed by Kurokawa. In addition, he cut and used part of it, then on that part he drew and created a photo-based drawing as a model for his Helix City design.

Importantly, Metabolism was in visual, structural and intellectual synch with its contemporary counterparts of the West, such as Archigram, Cedric Price in Britain, Utopie in France, Hans Hollein in Austria, Archizoom and Superstudio in Italy, and Louis Khan in the United States, all of whom imagined the city as a megastructure and created it with visual materials of a utopian orientation. As Metabolists, not to mention Tange, realized beginning in the late 1950s, that different parts of architecture and the city grew at different paces, they shifted from a simplistic functional approach to linguistics-based structuralism, employing it as an organizing principle for their designs. Based on the pioneering work of Ferdinand de Saussure, Roman Jakobson, Roland Barthes, and others, and further developed by Claude Levi-Strauss and Jean Piaget, the Metabolists understood structure as “a complex yet closed set of relationships in which the elements can be changed or replaced, but in such a way that they remain dependent on—while their meanings are determined by—the whole structural system. In other words, the individual units have meaning only by virtue of their relationship to one another.”<sup>191</sup> For these young architects, the megastructures represented “a new vision of modernity unhindered by the social technical constraints of the past. Like the pioneers of modern architecture of the early twentieth century, their aim was to bring about a utopian transformation of the built environment at a

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<sup>191</sup> Botond Bogner, *Contemporary Japanese Architecture: Its Development and Culture* (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold Company, 1985), 109.



scale and speed as yet unseen.”<sup>192</sup> But unlike their Western counterparts, the Metabolists’ designs were specifically rooted in 1950s Japan, reflecting the nation’s devastated cities, as seen in photographs or remembered from their personal memories, and the possibility of another nuclear catastrophe. Wendelken argues that “it [Metabolism] was a form of cultural nihilism that developed out of the trauma of defeat in war followed by occupation.... Metabolism addressed the need to construct meaning out of the erasure of memory and the loss of identity.”<sup>193</sup> In addition, I argue that the collective and its members’ designs were generated in reaction to their memories of cities on fire and reduced entirely to rubble, as reinforced in the photographs of *yakeato*. The photographs and the then-current chaotic condition of the cities were registered as a sign of the cities’ continuing life and resiliency.

The collective, originally called the Burnt Ash School (which reflected the condition of postwar Japanese cities so thoroughly destroyed that no ruins but ashes were left), settled on naming itself Metabolism because the Japanese translation for the word “metabolism,” “*shinchintaisha*” (meaning “renewal, replacement and metabolism”), had an undertone of the Buddhist concepts of transmogrification and reincarnation.<sup>194</sup> It implied the characteristics of a Japanese city, ephemeral and impermanent. As the Japanese translation implies, the collective’s naming also had a Marxist inclination that advocated for the city as a community (e.g., “Agriculture City” for farmers by Kurokawa Kishō) and positioned itself against the establishment in design.

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<sup>192</sup> Sarah Deyoung, “Memories of the Urban Future: the Rise and Fall of the Megastructure,” in *The Changing of the Avant-Garde: Visionary Architectural Drawings from the Howard Gilman Collection* (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 2002), 24.

<sup>193</sup> Wendelken, 280.

<sup>194</sup> Yatsuka and Yoshimatsu, 11-18.

The collective's members, particularly Kurokawa, who traveled in 1958 to the Soviet Union to attend a student conference in architecture, were visually inspired by drawings of utopian cities envisioned by early 20<sup>th</sup> century Russian artists such as Georgy Krutikou, Vladimir Tatlin, Alexander Rodchenko and El Lissitzky. Kurokawa, who had studied with the Marxist architect and educator Nishiyama Uzō at the University of Kyoto, later produced numerous design drawings of an urban community, and the drawings were particularly imaginative. During his trip to the USSR in 1958, Kurokawa was exposed to, and unmistakably inspired by, the urban developments from the post-Stalinist Soviet Union era. The influence of Soviet urban development on Japanese architects can be traced to a popular book published in Japan in 1956, entitled *Sutārin igo no soren* (The Soviet Union after Stalin). It includes an essay by Arthur Joyce, titled "Soviet Art and Architecture: Recent Developments" and was translated by the leftist critic of architecture, Hamaguchi Ryūichi. In the essay, while noting the importance of early 20<sup>th</sup> century avant-garde art and architecture (such as Futurism) to Soviet artists and architects in Constructivism, Joyce points out the then-recent and powerful resurgence of classicism and ethnic tradition in design and art in the Soviet Union. As applied, he argues that such a resurgence influenced the stylistic range and scope of large-scale urban designs for public buildings and plazas, and that such an influence can be observed in the vast and monumental scale found in city design and other architectural projects.<sup>195</sup> Arguably, such precedents from the Soviet Union provided the Metabolism architects with one potential solution to deal with the traditional in designing a postwar city.

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<sup>195</sup> Arthur Joyce, "Soviet Art and Architecture: Recent Developments," trans. Hamaguchi Ryūichi, *Sutārin igo no Soren* (The Soviet Union after Stalin), (Tokyo: Nihon Gaisei Gakkai Shuppanyoku, 1956), unpaginated.

## The Lasting Impact of the Tradition Debate

As discussed in the previous chapter of the dissertation, many of the Japanese architects and artists were affected by the *dentō ronsō* (the tradition debate) of the 1950s. Covering a wide range of areas in art, architecture and culture, the discourse mainly developed through printed materials, particularly journals of art and architecture, as discussed in Chapter 1. (Part of the discourse's underlying factor can be traced to an earlier discourse on the formation of national literature, which sprang from a series of roundtable discussions printed in 1942 in the literary journal *Kokumin bungaku* and known collectively as the “overcoming modernity” discussions.) In architecture, Tange and Kawazoe were among the major figures engaged in the tradition discourse. Their prominence was relevant to Metabolism because, under their influence and leadership, the young architects further interpreted the discourse in their own designs, searching for a structure (of the city and in architecture generally) that would incorporate the spirit, pattern, expressions, and function of traditional Japanese architecture while utilizing the latest technology. In premodern architecture, they looked into characteristics such as architecture's parts being replaceable and exchangeable, its overall ability to embody a circular life, and its relationship with nature. Moreover, as historian Lin points out, the reexamination of Japanese tradition through the tradition discourse provided the Metabolists with a philosophical foundation and a springboard to search for their cultural and design identity.<sup>196</sup> The debate motivated the Metabolists to formulate and later transmit, through the manifesto they manually distributed at the WoDeCo, a message beyond Japan of their own design methodologies.

Metabolist Kikutake's prefabricated and unit-based concept of “move-net” and

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<sup>196</sup> Lin, 42.

his system of creating a city by multiplying such units is clearly shaped by elements of the tradition discourse. His prefabricated design reflects his belief in the Buddhist concept of *shinchintaisha*, as does his research interest in traditional Japanese wood construction techniques and structures.<sup>197</sup> The unit design was first revealed in his early Sky House design (1958)(Figure. 2.7). Various parts (such as the living room and kitchen) of the house may be adjusted and replaced, depending on the needs of its residents.<sup>198</sup> The system of the house's growth can be seen in Kikutake's drawing titled "Of the Order of a City's Metabolism (Toshi no shinchintaisha no junjo)(Right image in Figure. 2.8). The metabolic nature of the house design is related to the process of a city's multiplication. The relationship between Kikutake's house design and the drawing serves as an example of the collective architects' visual pursuit of a new paradigm of architecture and urbanism, and it is compared to the fundamental relationship between design and the laws of nature.

Kikutake and his fellow Metabolists followed Tange's example of manifesting

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<sup>197</sup> Kikutake researched traditional wood structures and developed a systems approach to design that could be applied with modern materials and techniques. One of the important things he learned from his experience of addition, modification, and relocation of traditional wood structures was to differentiate structural and non-structural elements and to assemble them into a "replaceable system." This principle of replaceability was applied on an urban scale, manifest in the architect's Towershaped City and Marine City schemes, and continued to appear as an important theme in many Metabolist designs. Ibid.

<sup>198</sup> Sky House was designed for Kikutake and his wife. Only its main structure is supported by four wall-columns, and is built of reinforced concrete. The rest of the house is built of industrially standardized parts. Facilities such as the kitchen and bath units are treated as prefabricated "move-net", subject to displacement according to changes in lifestyle or developments in technology. His design of the house is geared toward distinguishing its main living space from the movable facilities that serve it, and Kikutake compares it to Louis Kahn's conception of served space and servant space. The concept of "move-net" continued to be a key element of Kikutake's design in his Metabolism era. He further developed the concept and unit of a move-net and created a unit, called "move-block," that he applied in larger settings, such as a skyscraper or a city.

his design ideas through visual materials—as seen in the 1960 publication *Katsura* and, later, the 1965 photo book on the Ise Shrine *Ise*, a prototype of Japanese architecture that he created in collaboration with Kawazoe and the photographer Watanabe Yoshio<sup>199</sup>—and established their interpretation of tradition and modern design in their 1960 manifesto. But unlike these photographic publications, the goal behind the Metabolist manifesto was to propose a concrete design methodology. It developed from “image” to “form” and “structure.” In effect, their goal was to establish “a general discourse on urbanism that architects would be able to see and follow.”<sup>200</sup>

### **Inspirations for Metabolism: the August 1955 issue of the journal *Shinkenchiku* and the Image of *yakeato***

The August 1955 issue of the architecture journal *Shinkenchiku*, with its subtitle, “Genbakuka no sengo 10 nen nihonjin no kenchiku to kenchikuka” (The postwar decade with atomic bombs: Japanese architecture and architects), is elaborately designed with numerous photographs. It inspired the collective’s members, helping them to manifest their own visions in a publication format.<sup>201</sup> The *Shinkenchiku* volume was a special issue that marked the tenth-year anniversary of Japan’s postwar reconstructive efforts. It reflected not only the fields of architecture and urbanism in the postwar setting but the establishment of the identity of the postwar architectural profession. Not only did the issue focus on the successful aspects of urban development, it also identified the failures, anxieties and uncertainties of

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<sup>199</sup> Amid the *dentō ronsō* (the tradition discourse) in 1950s Japan, as discussed in Chapter 1, for many architects the 17<sup>th</sup> century architecture of Katsura was a key structure. This is because it was synthesized and renewed repeatedly over time, while yet containing fundamentally identical wooden structures. It was also equipped with expressions, while being inherently Japanese, that could transcend time and place.

<sup>200</sup> Lin, 44.

<sup>201</sup> *Shinkenchiku* (New architecture) 30:8 (Tokyo: Shinkenchikusha, August, 1955).

postwar Japan and underscored the social role of design and architects as the Cold War further proceeded. Importantly, the issue self-critically inquired about the positioning of contemporary architects and the processes of the development of modern Japanese architecture (including criticism and trends in architecture) in the history of modern Japan.<sup>202</sup> Various illustrated articles collectively discuss Japan's ten-year search for modern design, interpretations of the tradition, and the role of architects as a catalyst to create culture in the era of atomic energy. The issue's narratives, self-reflexive and self-conscious from the standpoint of an architect, were dramatized with numerous photographs of architectures and their inhabitants, as well as those of destroyed and reconstructed Japanese cities at the end of and after the war, respectively. Many photographs are cropped or collaged to fit better an article's context.

With a focus on subjects such as the everyday life of the Japanese people and their housing situation after the war, the issue surveyed the postwar development of Japan, in numerous design-related aspects ranging from architectural designs, engineering, materials, and theories, and the ideological issues behind "city and nation building," to the debate of tradition in the context of modern design. The preface to the issue is titled, "For the purposes of new advancement," and the issue as a whole is dedicated to the search for a new direction and development to create a better environment for Japan's urbanism and architecture in the years to come.

I argue that the issue was extremely important for the formation of Metabolism at many levels: Kawazoe Noboru, the driving force of the collective, was the chief editor of the three-person editorial team for the journal's special issue. The issue's strong visual orientation was promoted by Kawazoe, assisted by Taira Keiichi and Miyajima Kunio. (Its editorial advisors included Seike Kiyoshi, Ashihara Yoshinobu,

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<sup>202</sup> The preface of the August 1955 issue of *Shinkenchiku* was titled "Gendaishi no kyōkun – kenchikuka no hansei" (Lessons from contemporary history: the self-remorse of architects).

Watanabe Riki, and Asada Takashi, who later became instrumental in establishing Metabolism.) Knowing the power of photography, Kawazoe deliberately set the journal as a site for the tradition debate, illustrated with photographs of modern and premodern structures.

Kawazoe directed the issue's visual and narrative structures. Its elaborate and effective use of photographs can be traced to a number of the journal's earlier issues, as discussed in Chapter 1. Using both commissioned photographs taken by the journal's staff photographers (including Ishimoto Yasuhiro, Hirayama Chūji, and Taira Toshio) and found photographs, either artistic or vernacular, the issue freely, amply and elaborately utilizes images to create specific narratives and often provide a lasting impact for the arguments made. The issue's distinct art direction is signified in the cover page (Figure. 2.2), which features a relief of the three Chinese characters representing the journal title, with the engraving of the years 1945 to 1955 on a concrete wall. The page design implies that the issue as a whole embodies the history of urban development in that period. The issue also evinces the full emergence of the genre of architectural photography in postwar Japan and includes many photographs of recently built architectures. They all attempt to visually convey pristine and well-reasoned geometry, often found in the facades of such structures. Houses tend to be shot close and frontal with a plain background (that appears white in a black and white image) featuring as little shadow as possible, and corresponding to their layouts. A high-storied public or commercial building is often shot at a 45-degree angle so that its entirety is enclosed, with the inclusion of a few human figures or automobiles in the foreground to show the building's scale. For example, the photograph of the newly built Kinokuniya Bookstore, designed by Maekawa Kunio, conveys the frontal view of the structure, emphasizing its geometry-based harmony, well-balanced proportion and transparency. Many of the images in the issue were selected from a pool of existing

images (some commissioned) for the issue to accentuate the issue's narratives. Images of completely destroyed cities at the end of the war, and those of makeshift houses made of debris in the burned cities (Figure. 2.9) reinforce the memory of readers that Japan's postwar efforts began with ground zero. These images, juxtaposed with the images of recently built buildings such as the megastructure Tetsudō Kaikan Daimaru Department Store in Tokyo (Figure. 2.10) and Tange Kenzo's Hiroshima Peace Park complex, effectively convey to readers the nation's rapid and powerful recovery efforts.

In this special issue, first, the photographs of utterly burnt-out cities Tokyo and Hiroshima set the tone and foundations for the discussions. The first full-page photograph in the issue (Figure. 2.4) is the aerial photo of a decimated Tokyo at the end of the war. The *yakeato* photograph is accompanied by one of the opening paragraphs of the section, which reads:

Towards the end of the war, air-raids burnt one house per every seven [in cities]. When people evacuated to the countryside, they had to destroy with their own hands one house per 25 [to prevent situations in which they could catch fire]. The total damage of 2,650,000 houses was concentrated in 119 cities throughout Japan, and in these cities housing losses were at a range of 50 to 90%. These losses constitute a housing destruction directly caused by the war, but the indirect destruction was even larger. . . . At the end of the war, we were left alone in a field completely burnt as far as the eye could see.<sup>203</sup>

The photograph, together with the text, emphasizes that a majority of the city, made of wood, almost completely vanished from a series of air raids and fire, as well as highlighting the sporadically remaining modern structures of reinforced concrete. It

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<sup>203</sup> *Shinken-chiku*, August 1955, 17.



reveals the burnt city's geometrical division, seen in large streets surrounded by rivers and canals. In short, the photograph reinforces the fact that a part of the city, supported by modern technology, has survived the war. The photograph, by suggesting to readers a direction for the development of modern city planning, can be construed as a message from the editors to the readers (including architects), as a warning, encouragement, or simply a piece of memory, and it encapsulates the essence of the issue.

The aerial photography crowns the seven-page section, titled “Nihonjin no seikatsu to sumai” (Japanese life and residences), which documents the ten-year history of housing development in postwar Japan. A series of photographs that richly illustrate the section helps to construct a persuasive and controlled narrative of the nation's reconstruction efforts, thereby positing a sense of linear and continuous progression in Japan's recent urban development. The section begins with the photographs of barracks and makeshift housing made of debris left from the war (e.g., a bus or a burnt building), wood prefabricated houses, multi-storied concrete apartments, and the building boom and the residential housing boom between 1949 and 1954. (The boom was triggered by the combination of the booming economy brought about by the Korean War, and the enactment of new laws governing the architectural profession and the financing of houses.<sup>204</sup>) The photographs often reflect residents' perspectives (i.e., inclusion of photographs shot from the ground level as well as floor plans) and some images show residents in their built environments (e.g., an entire family sleeping a single futon in a crowded living room). Often the images include an older part of the neighborhood to accentuate that the new development has

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<sup>204</sup> In May 1950, the following three laws (known collectively as “Kenchiku sanpō” (Three laws relating to architecture)) were promulgated: Laws governing the standard for architecture (Kenchiku kijun hō); Laws governing architects (Kenchikushi hō); and Laws governing Public Funds for Housing (Jūtaku kinyu kōko hō).

made a contribution (Figure. 2.11).<sup>205</sup> (For example, one photograph shows newly built multi-floored concrete apartment complexes in the foreground, and also shows a crowded group of prefabricated wooden one-storied houses, with the modern apartment complexes in the background.)

Also included in the issue is a ten-year chronology of Japanese politics and the development of urbanism. It is formed of two folded two-page spreads that add three-dimensionality to the housing history (Figure. 2.12). Notably, the chronology begins with the cut-off image of an atomic cloud, and locates at its bottom a band of images of various newly built buildings and houses. It also collages a human figure cut out from a snapshot, and inserts an illustration of a rising graph chart that symbolically shows the nation's upward development. As a whole, the chronology is rhythmically fused with the visual sensibility and movement of Pop art in mapping out the ten-year history.

Effective selection and use of photographs for the purpose of directing a narrative continue throughout the journal issue. For example, the subsequent section, entitled "How architects have coped with the reconstruction" begins with a dark surveillance-like aerial image of the Akihabara part of downtown Tokyo, photographed at the end of the war. The photograph (Figure. 2.13) is surrounded by proposed new development plans for the area, which seem to promise a bright future and a sense of renewal.

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<sup>205</sup> This part resonates with Walter Benjamin's dialectics of the old and the new, regarding which he states, "Corresponding to the forms of the new means of production, which in the beginning is still ruled by the form of the old (Marx), are images in the collective consciousness in which the new is permeated with the old." From "Paris, Capital of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century" Walter Benjamin, *The Work of Art in the Age of its Technical Producibility and Other Writings on Media*, ed. Michael W. Jennings, et al., trans. Edmund Jephcott, et al. (Cambridge, MA, and London: Belkap/Harvard UP, 2008), 97-98.

The section also examines the emergence and collective activities of professional architects toward reconstruction as Japan's postwar politics evolved, and it focuses on well-composed 'architectural' photographs of the new buildings. Black and white, naturally lit, almost always frontal, devoid of any nuances, these photographs (Figure. 2.14) serve to indicate the establishment of the genre of architectural photography in postwar Japan. With these crisp visual images, the section maintains a self-critical tone in unfolding the short history. For example, it critically analyzes the development and fall of avant-garde and socialist architectural movements, like the short-lived, Marxist-oriented organization NAU (i.e., Shin-Nihon Kenchikuka Shūdan, meaning "New Japan Group of Architects"),<sup>206</sup> which criticized well-established architects and government organizations in their reconstructive efforts. (The organization was established in 1947 and dissolved in 1952.) The section highlights the increase of capitalism-infused production (known as *jūtaku rasshu*, meaning "housing rush"), together with debates on architectural design (such as the tradition debate, as discussed in Chapter 1) at the time of the new democracy and its increasing collision with state-sponsored capitalism, and later the resurgence of the

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<sup>206</sup> NAU's statement of purpose is as follows:

NAU's activities are to further develop the heritage of past movements in contemporary situations in order to create a mass architectural culture. We will participate as architectural technicians in "the construction of democratic Japan" through the following activities:

- (1) we will render our techniques a weapon to protect people's lives;
- (2) we will make efforts always to maintain superior and correct techniques;
- (3) we will correctly recognize the tradition of the ethnic (*minzoku*);
- (4) we will break through feudalism and will fight reactionism;
- (5) we will protect each other's life and go forward even when we belong to different specializations and occupations;
- (6) we will unite in a grand manner, and do away with sect doctrines (*sekuto shugi*); and finally
- (7) we will unite the global democratic cultural movement.

notion of invented tradition.<sup>207</sup> Committed to lead the construction of democratic Japan, the socialist group collapsed, in part influenced by the pressure of the Red Purge.<sup>208</sup> One page in the section, entitled “The collapse of NAU 1951-1952: the end of simple functionalism” (Figure. 2.15), features the logo and front page of the organization’s newsletter (the logo resembles a font type used in propaganda materials for the USSR), and two photographs, frontal and side views, of the then-recently completed modernist Yawata Labor Hall. The photographs emphasize the structure’s functional clarity and its rationality through design, using modern materials such as glass, steel and concrete, and serve to align the group with modern architectural movements such as Bauhaus.<sup>209</sup>

The section concludes with two sub-sections, titled “Yomigaeru Nihonchō – kōwa kibun ni ukabiagaru kaiko shumi 1951-52” (The revival of Japanese taste in design – nostalgic taste which emerged in the atmosphere of the peace treaty 1951-52)(Figure. 2.16) and “Atarashii kūkan no kakutoku – kūkan no saikakutoku to atarashii tenkai 1953-55” (The acquisition of new space – reacquisition of space and new development 1953-55). Photography assists these sections by presenting images that focus on the merger of premodern Japanese expressions and modern technology and materials to argue that Modernist architecture and space suited in postwar Japan would derive from Japan’s own cultural heritage. In a section titled “Revival,” the photographs focus on the architecture’s windows where modern windows coexist with

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<sup>207</sup> With respect to the role of architects in postwar democratic Japan, books such as Hamaguchi Ryūichi’s *Hyūmanizumu no kenchiku* (Architecture of humanism), Nishiyama Uzō’s *Korekara no sumai* (Housing for now and the future), Hamaguchi Miho’s *Nihon jyūtaku no hōkensei* (Feudalism of Japanese housing), and Kon Wajirō’s *Jyūseikatsu* (Residential life) were published in the first decade of postwar Japan, indicating a high level of interest in the field of housing and residential architecture.

<sup>208</sup> *Shinkenchiku*, August 1955, 31.

<sup>209</sup> The organization’s vision of rendering concrete and Brutalism-influenced houses for workers were later carried on in the design of collective apartment complexes.

Japanese sliding doors of paper (all of which are geometrically shaped and on a human scale) and on architecture that intersects with a garden space. The last subsection, under the title of “The acquisition of new space...” shows nine photographs of interior space, five of which were shot in architectures designed by Tange in the 1950s. (Such a selection does not hide either Tange’s influence nor the journal editor’s bias for the architect.) These photographs emphasize the successful adoption of new materials such as steel, glass and concrete in modern space, and the harmonious merger in space with specific expressions from premodern architectures of Japan as well as with the space outside. The subject of these photographs resembles that of many of the photographs of Katsura in the 1960 publication by Ishimoto and Tange.

### **The Importance of Collaboration**

In the issue, photography also illustrates an important dialogue, entitled “Genbaku jidai to kenchiku: genshi butsuri gakusha to kenchikuka tonō taidan” (Atomic bomb age and architecture: a dialogue between an architect and a nuclear physicist)(Figure. 2.17), between the Marxist physicist, Takeya Mitsuo, and Metabolism’s behind-the-scenes driving force, Asada Takashi. My close reading of the dialogue reveals its significance, as an intellectual triggering event, and how it eventually led to the formation of the collective Metabolism. The dialogue suggests, among many things, the importance of working as a collective (where each member is equal and free to be critical toward the others) to produce critical synergy for the best results in the members’ respective fields (i.e., architecture or physics) for survival and prosperity in the era of atomic energy.<sup>210</sup>

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<sup>210</sup> “Genbaku Jidai to Kenchiku: genshibutsuri gakusha to kenchikuka no taiwa” (The nuclear bomb era and architecture: a dialogue between a nuclear physicist and an architect), *Shinkenchiku* (August 1955), 77-88.

This issue is notable in its delineation of the significance of interdisciplinary collective efforts for the purposes of searching for directions of postwar architecture and design professionals. Such a tendency is crystallized in the dialogue between Takeya and Asada, the former of whom urges architects to form a collective and assume the role of building civilization in postwar Japan, being aware of the circular destiny of a Japanese city. On this, Takeya comments:

The atomic bomb turned the city into a burnt field in a moment. Surely the architects who are in charge of civilization must feel that they are unable to endure such a loss. But, from early on in Japan, it has been repeated that although cities were burnt overnight, soon barracks were built on the surface of those very cities. Japan's proud 'spiritual culture' was developed on a *mujō* [無情 heartlessness] culture based on that attitude [*sore*]...therefore, I believe that Japanese architects (in comparison to Western and Chinese architects) did not feel a significant responsibility to build up 'civilization'...but the time has arrived that architects, in order to overcome the era of the atomic bomb, must assume their responsibilities to build 'civilization.' The atomic era is a matter of civilization.<sup>211</sup>

The dialogue between the two men focuses on, among many other things, the differences and similarities of the methodologies in their respective fields of architecture and physics in the post-atomic bomb era. Takeya points out that physics requires, first, a careful study of nature, and second, a response. He suggests to Asada that architecture in postwar Japan requires the same process and attitude, and that it must face the needs of human life from a humanistic perspective. The two men concur that they can reach the era of atomic energy (*genshiryoku jidai*) that is the post-atomic

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<sup>211</sup> Ibid.

bomb era, and that this might promise a bright future where energy sources should be used in a humanistic way, and, furthermore, that architects need to search for humanism in architecture to overcome the age of the atomic bomb. Takeya and Asada also agree on the importance of the efforts of a self-critical collective as a way to overcome the mere academism often seen in their respective fields. They discuss the success of group efforts by Japanese physicists studying the theory of elementary particles as an excellent example to follow.<sup>212</sup> For Asada personally, as the talented assistant architect for Tange Kenzō, this dialogue was instrumental for recognizing the importance of collective efforts in addressing elements of postwar design and the design profession. Creating with design so as to respond to nature was another approach he learned from the dialogue. Among many other things, the dialogue certainly had an impact not only on Asada but on the young readers of the journal, who at the time were struggling to determine a way to contribute to the making of a new cityscape in the second decade of postwar Japan. I contend that this dialogue was invaluable in laying an important foundation in Asada's mind for him to later conceive the collective, Metabolism.

The selection and sequence of the photographs illustrating the article function to navigate the flow of the dialogue between Asada and Takeya. That is to say, the photographs serve to unfold and annotate the often difficult and abstract nature of the conversation. The sequence begins with a photograph of the mushroom cloud of an atomic bomb (upper image in Figure. 2. 18) with a caption that reads, “[C]urrently, we are still in the atomic bomb age, and strictly speaking, have not reached the atomic energy age. Only if we are able to overcome the former, will the latter promise a bright future.”<sup>213</sup> The dialogue is accompanied by two powerful images of devastated cities,

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<sup>212</sup> Ibid.

the first of which is a panoramic view of Hiroshima featuring the almost entirely destroyed dome over the Hiroshima River (Lower image in Figure. 2.18). It is the most memorable photograph of the *yakeato* of a bombed city. Nagasaki is represented in two photographs taken by the army photographer Yamahata Yōsuke (whose work will be discussed in depth in Chapter 3 of the dissertation) (Figure. 2.19) one day after the dropping of the bomb. One image shows a crushed and charred human body with the *yakeato* forming a background, while the other shows the cropped image of a boy holding a rice ball in his right hand. (This image of the boy is well known but the full picture shows his mother standing absent-mindedly behind him. The reason for cropping her out is unsubstantiated, but the effect of the cropping has been to turn the boy into the lone subject of the photograph. The boy's hand, which holds a rice ball, has become the *punctum* of the photograph in Barthes's sense.) These Nagasaki photographs together with the Hiroshima panorama accentuate the devastation, the ultimate death, of the cities and their residents. Then, as the tone of the dialogue shifts to a brighter register, it is complemented with five photographs of Tange's recently completed Hiroshima Peace Park complex. Among them, the first, and the largest, is a photomontage of a model of the three main buildings (Figure. 2.20). The architectural models are inserted against an image of a blue sky with clouds, creating an artificial and otherworldly atmosphere. The montage is juxtaposed with four smaller images of the same structures, shot from various locations. They include a photograph of the Hiroshima Peace Center shot from the then-recently completed bridge by Noguchi Isamu, titled "Iku" (meaning, departing).

In the dialogue, this method of showing the photographs of both before and after the reconstruction efforts is also applied in the case of Nagasaki (Figure. 2.21). The efforts for Nagasaki are shown in the juxtaposition of the wide-lens image of the remains of the Romanesque-style Urakami Tenshudō Cathedral in *yakeato*, and three



photographs of the then-recently completed Modernist Nagasaki Kokusai Bunka Kaikan (Nagasaki hall of international culture) designed by Satō Takeo. The three photographs are impressive renderings of the modern structure, one of which frontally depicts the brightly lit building at night. It stands over the fountain, reflecting its shadow, where a memorial statue stands. The brightly lit geometry-based structure with ample use of glass, steel and concrete visualizes the arrival of the democratic postwar era in the once-devastated city. Together with the two other photographs, which show the details of the structure and the fountain, the architecture, as reproduced in the photograph, emphasizes what modern architecture has brought to a city once laid waste by an atomic bomb.

Enigmatically, the article ends with the drawing of a futuristic and post-apocalyptic structure, meant to be a memorial for the bomb victims, titled “Temple Atomic Catastrophes August 1955,” by the architect Shirai Seiichi (Figure. 2.22), who also authored an important essay on a vernacular late Edo-period house in Izu, with photographs by Ishimoto, which appeared in the August 1956 issue of *Shinkenchiku*. The temple, serving as a memorial temple for nuclear victims, is equipped with nuclear shelters underground. The drawing indicates Shirai’s anxiety over a possible nuclear war, and it encapsulates a part of the general ambiance as well as the sentiments of Takeya and Asada, the two participants in the dialogue.

The two men conclude the dialogue by commenting on the importance of forming a group in which its members would work towards a common goal, with each member allowed to offer mutually constructive criticism, and in which a form (collectivism) could be productively engaged by an architect desiring to contribute toward efforts to rebuild civilization in the postwar culture.

## **Metabolist Methodologies: Imagery as Discourse, and Photography as Democratic Medium**

Metabolism was a collective and a self-contained movement with its own methodologies. The group adopted technological, scientific, biological and visual approaches in architecture and urbanism, in order to reevaluate critically the tradition of Japan.<sup>214</sup> I argue that Metabolism was the first architecture group in modern Japan that promoted its ideas through active and imaginative engagement of visual materials, effectively incorporating both photography and drawings, in its visionary expressions of a city. The collective members presented their visions in small publications, their own manifesto and architecture journal issues.<sup>215</sup> Such publications were the main format by which the collective and its members distributed their ideas through the active journal economy.

One important aim of the collective was to present, in the form of models, illustrations and in some cases writings, methodologies for designing a city in line with the theories advocated in the manifesto. The Metabolists wanted to create an image-base discourse for imagining a city for the future, rather than for the purpose of designing a buildable architecture. Kikutake emphasizes the future-driven nature of city design by stating, “the design of a city must be the property of tomorrow. It should be originated by a wish for, and expression of, tomorrow. The past problems of the city should be re-adjusted and prepared for tomorrow, but, they should not restrict that

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<sup>214</sup> Yatsuka and Yoshimatsu, 20.

<sup>215</sup> Following the release of the collective’s manifesto in spring 1960, the November issue of the journal *Kindai kenchiku* dedicated 50 pages to discuss the designs and philosophy of the collective. It also included a roundtable discussion among Tange and some of the collective members. It should be noted that a few of the city designs in the manifesto had already been released, prior to its publication. For example, Kikutake’s Tower Shaped City was released in the December 1958 issue of the journal *Kokusai kenchiku*.

tomorrow.”<sup>216</sup>

I argue that, for this reason, the collective’s members often resorted to found photography as a base material to investigate and expand their ideas. These architects believed that pictures, which they either created or found, could be arranged in the context of their own design methodologies. Arguably, in a manner not so different from the post-World War I political and visual imagination of Moholy-Nagy, Malevich or Lissitsky—or of Herbert Bayer, who designed the cover of the 1960 edition of the photobook, *Katsura*—the Metabolists each positioned themselves as a “social and visual engineer” who could arrange the city in a way advocated by the collective.<sup>217</sup> Their urban spatial imagining was often supported by “photographic imagining” because, in the architects’ minds, photography could provide a laboratory for social and urban reconstruction. For the Metabolists, the social, urban and visual forms they found through photography “were interrelated plastic media that were to be molded in tandem according to an overall design or plan or shape of the modern world.”<sup>218</sup> For example, a series of city plans Kurokawa proposed in line with his Metabolist methodologies, such as the Helix City, the Seattle Civic Center Fountain competition design, and the Agricultural City, represent the young architect’s imaginative use of photography for his urban utopia. (Among the aforementioned three designs, the first and the third designs appeared in the 1960 manifesto.) He subsequently developed these designs further, and the second design together with

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<sup>216</sup> Kawazoe, et al., *Metabolism: Proposals for a New Urbanism*, 13.

<sup>217</sup> This argument was introduced by Blake Stimson in his 2006 book, *The Pivot of the World: Photography and its Nation*, which addressed different contexts, including Robert Frank’s photo series, *Americans*, the Museum of Modern Art exhibition in 1954, *The Family of Man*, and the photography of vernacular architectures by the German couple, Bernd and Hella Becher, in connection with post-World War II sentiment and politics in the US.

<sup>218</sup> Stimson, Blake *The Pivot of the World: Photography and its Nation* (2006) Cambridge, MA MIT Press, 16-17.

many others appeared in the architect's fully developed 1970 monograph, *The Work of Kurokawa Kishō* (Kurokawa Kishō no sakuhin)(Figure. 2.23). In particular, he combined a close-up image of an architectural model of the double-helix structure of DNA with his own manual drawing, merging the spaces of two- and three-dimensions, and making the photo-drawing collage (Figure. 2.6) one step closer to reality. The resultant collage conveys the complexity and scale of the imagined space, a synthesis of the seemingly real and the unreal. Comparing the collage to his other drawing of the helix structure emphasizes the collage's proximity to reality (Figure. 2.18). As seen in another example similarly mixing a photograph with a drawing (Figure. 2.24), Kurokawa utilized the technique of photo collage on numerous occasions throughout his Metabolism-phase to visualize his city plans. As shown in these examples, with photography, the Metabolists became social and cultural engineers to present a vision of a city, cutting and pasting their own images and/or found images and stitching them with their own drawings. Their visual methodologies were related to their theories of urbanism, for example, as will be introduced below in the theories of Kurokawa and Kikutake.

To Kurokawa, having an image first, or more precisely, the total image of a city, would be an essential and preliminary step of his methodology for creating the ideal city. He defines the role of an architect as that of discovering a system and amplifying it, such that it becomes a common methodology through his visual embodiment of the image. Kurokawa, in his 1960 essay, titled "Metabolism Methodology – Preface to New Methodology for Environmental Creation," discusses the meaning of 'the total image of the city' and how it relates to the method of

design.<sup>219</sup> He argues that a fierce collision occurs between an “image” and a “method of design,” and that in order for an architect to have a strong “image” that does not lose out to the method, he would need to always have a rich worldview, further improving it towards a future image. He argues that only when there is a high tension between the “image” and “method of design,” an analysis of function has the capacity to become a subjective solution; the arrangement and ordering of an image would become essential to limiting and finding space uniformity in a technical system. Even if an architect participates in the creation of an image, if a method of design failed to be established, there would be no development for substantive space integrity. On the other hand, if an architect’s image is not based on a rich worldview, the space to be created there would lack richness.<sup>220</sup> Kurokawa further argues that a second-stage architect’s image, realized through his design method, would become a “phenomenon” in society, eventually to bounce back to the architect.

Kurokawa points out that we must seek out a future image of space on a human scale, and at the same time, a total image of future environments for humanity revealed in its entirety. It is the task of an architect, through visualization of such a total image into realization, to identify and establish a system, developing and raising it to the level of a common methodology.

In concrete terms, his methodology with respect to image and creation consists of the “denotative” method and the “connotative” method. Kurokawa predicts that only an architect who simultaneously owns both methods can truly approach the city

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<sup>219</sup> Kurokawa Kishō, “Metabolism Methodology: Preface to a New Methodology for Environmental Creation” *Kindai kenchiku* (Modern architecture) vol. 14 no. 11, (Tokyo: Kindai Kenchikusha, November 1960), 50-53.

<sup>220</sup> Kurokawa, Kishō, Reprint of “Metabolism Methodology – Preface to New Methodology of Creation and Environments” in *Kurokawa Kishō no sakuhin* (Tokyo: Bijutsu Shuppansha, 1970) 140.

through architecture.<sup>221</sup> Based on his theory, only when the system of city creation, which exists inside the “embodiment” of a city plan, develops internally, and as a result comes close to architectural language and technology, is an architect able to possess a connotative methodology.

One can argue that, in the case of Kurokawa, creating a language/concept-based visual and functional system, through the exercise of embodying a city plan, was often his end. For example, through the images of his city plans (such as “the New Tokyo Plan,” “Vertical Wall City,” and “Agricultural City Plan,” and “the New Capital Plan” as published in the 1960 manifesto), he visualized systems like “chain cluster,” “connector,” “independence of master space and servant space,” “space frame,” and “cycle transportation.” For example, in his 1960 essay, Kurokawa introduced the concept and system of “connector,” and based on it he developed “the system concept of binary digit system” applicable in his communication and transportation system. Then, he implemented the binary digit system transportation system in his models of “Cycle Transportation” and “Helix Transportation” in a later essay, titled “Toshi dezaian no gijutsu” (Technique of city design). In his abstract concepts as visualized in a drawing or a photo-collage, Kurokawa simulated a model of the megalopolis, advancing the position that an imaginary model of a city could

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<sup>221</sup> For example, using the example of “piloti,” Kurokawa argues that there would be a denotative method when the term “piloti” reaches society and creates a deeper and wider connection there. He argues that what society needs to seek is a future image of human-scaled space as represented in “piloti,” and at the same time, a total image of the future environment of the entire human group. During the course of visually realizing such an image, society would need to discover a system and raise it to be a common methodology. The process would require the involvement of an architect. When the city creation system, enclosed in the realization of a city plan, develops connotatively and comes narrowly close to an architectural term and technique, the architect would be able to obtain “an connotative method.” Ibid.

contribute to designing the elements of a future city to be potentially built.<sup>222</sup>

Kurokawa's aforementioned 1970 monograph reveals the entirety of his visions and architectures from his Metabolism era, most of which are represented in photographs and photo-drawing collages.<sup>223</sup> It pursues the architect's practice, conceptual and architectural; the content and design layout of the monographic publication itself is presented as a city under the principles of Metabolism. The book, which shares the Metabolist design philosophy, was in part designed by Awazu Kiyoshi, a graphic designer and fellow member of the collective.

The architect's focus on a prefabricated capsule as the core unit of a structure relates him to the systems and projects he earlier proposed in the Metabolism manifesto. His two built 1970 World pavilion designs (i.e., the Toshiba IHI Pavilion, and the Takara Beauty Group Pavilion (Figure. 2.25)) in the publication reveal his Metabolism-era designs, positioning the pavilions as capsule unit structures that can either metamorphose or deconstruct themselves. His fascination with capsules can be interpreted as a manifestation of his anxiety over a potential nuclear war, and it later led to his design and creation of the Nakagin Capsule Towers, which is also featured in the 1970 monograph. There, juxtaposing architectural drawings, photographs of the making of the pavilions, and photographs of models and built projects, Kurokawa

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<sup>222</sup> Kenzō Tange et al., *Nihon no toshi kūkan* (Tokyo, Shōkokusha, 1968), 22. This influential publication, which analyzes in depth the relationship between modern methodologies for designing a city and the typologies, techniques and elements found in premodern Japanese cities, also discusses the importance of “an imaginary model” of a city for actually designing cities. The book was written by eleven young architects, many of whom were affiliated with Tange Kenzō in his laboratory in urban design at the University of Tokyo, and they include Isozaki Arata, historian Itō Teiji, and Tomita Reiko. The book's contents were first published in the December 1963 issue of the journal, *Kenchiku bunka* (architectural culture).

<sup>223</sup> Kurokawa, Kishō *Work of Kurokawa Kishō (Kurokawa Kishō no sakuhin)* (Tokyo: Bijutsu Shuppansha, 1970).

successfully interweaves the selected images, and his visions and built projects, conveying his anxious but utopian visions of a future city.

Kikutake took a different approach, but his strategy was as visually oriented as Kurokawa's. His city planning methodology derives from his built Sky House design (1957-58), mentioned earlier. With his deductive methodology, known as "*ka, kata, katachi*," Kikutake has built up to the present date a dozen buildings based on his Metabolism-era methodology as formulated in the late 1950s. In a 1969 anthology of his earlier writings, entitled *Taisha kenchiku ron: ka, kata, katachi* (Metabolic architectural theory: *ka, kata, katachi*), Kikutake asserts that design has the following two processes: recognition and practice, and he applies in each of the processes the three-step approach "*ka, kata, katachi*,"<sup>224</sup> explaining the approach in the drawing of the three triangles that explain the methodology (Figure. 2.26) For Kikutake, *ka* means an image or a vision, *kata* means a type directed by technology in order to obtain mobility, changeability, and adaptability. *Katachi* means the final form stage. Under his logic, by removing a function attached to it, *katachi* can revert back to *ka*.<sup>225</sup> As seen in the drawing, Kikutake produces his designs in the process of engaging the three-step method. In this connection, Kikutake emphasizes the significance of *ka*, the role of imagining, in both the recognition and practice of design. In addition, the architect emphasized the replaceability and exchangeability of the parts of architecture or a city in his Metabolist designs through a careful study of the structure, function and

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<sup>224</sup> In his creation of the methodology, Kikutake was influenced by physicist Takeya Mitsuo's theory of the human recognition process, entitled "*benshohō no shomondai*," Louis Kahn's design philosophy and Kawazoe Noboru's architectural criticism. Kikutake, Kiyonori. *Theory of Metabolic Architecture: ka, kata, katachi (taisha kenchiku ron: ka, kata, katachi)*, (Tokyo: Shokokusha, 1969). Kikutake's fictional three steps are (1) the phenomenological stage, (2) substantial theory stage, and (3) essential theory stage. Working through these steps, he obtained a position setting forth the relationship between space and function.

<sup>225</sup> Kawazoe, et al., *Metabolism: Proposals for a New Urbanism*, 74-5.



composition of a premodern Japanese building made of wood.

The commonality in the two Metabolists' approach to design, that is to say, their privileging of image and its legibility in designing a city, may well have derived from the writing of American architect and theorist, Kevin Lynch, particularly given that Lynch's concepts as manifested in his 1960 publication, *The Image of the City*, were influential among young architects in Japan at that time. (The book was later translated into Japanese by Tange Kenzō and his associate architect Tomita Reiko, and made available to a Japanese audience in 1968.) The book, which analyzes "the visual quality of the American city by studying the mental image of that city which is held by its citizens,"<sup>226</sup> focuses on the city's "clarity or 'legibility' of the cityscape."<sup>227</sup> The Metabolists' interpretation of such assets of the cityscape can be extrapolated from the methods they use to organize a city, and from the prefabricated unit base in their designs. By legibility, Lynch means "the ease with which [the parts of an image] can be recognized and can be organized into a coherent pattern."<sup>228</sup> He also emphasizes the importance of "an ordered environment" and building an image of such an environment, arguing that such an environmental image may be broken down into three components: identity, structure, and meaning. He further argues for the importance of "imageability," which is "the quality in a physical object, which gives it a high probability of evoking a strong image in any given observer."<sup>229</sup> As will be discussed below, the Metabolists' keen consciousness of these concepts of legibility,

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<sup>226</sup> Lynch, Kevin. *The Image of the City* (Cambridge, MA: The Joint Center for Urban Studies, 1960), 2.

<sup>227</sup> Ibid.

<sup>228</sup> Ibid.

<sup>229</sup> Lynch, 9-10. In addition, he explains that, "[i]t is that shape, color, or arrangement which facilitates the making of vividly identified, powerfully structured, highly useful mental images of the environment.... [It] might also be called *legibility*, or perhaps *visibility* in a heightened sense, where objects are not only able to be seen, but are presented sharply and intensely to the senses."

imageability and environments are sensed in particular from various of their designs and writings found in the 1960 manifesto.

### **The Manifesto, *Metabolism: Proposal for a New Urbanism***

Each of the participating architects expressed his methodology of design and manifested the importance of visual materials in the collective's bilingual, eighty-eight page long manifesto, *Metabolism: Proposal for a New Urbanism* (Figure. 2.1).

Kawazoe Noboru (the editor of the architecture journal, *Shinkenchiku*, including its August 1955 issue) edited the compact, 8 x 8 1/4" manifesto, and his wife, Yasuko, the editor of a short-lived design magazine, *Living Design*, published by Bijutsu Shuppansha, served as the design editor for the manifesto. Although simply designed, the manifesto was visually charged with more than a dozen photographs (including two two-page photographs (one spread): one of them by Hamaya Hiroshi and the other by Andreas Feininger), architectural drawings, and illustrations, most notably those by Awazu Kiyoshi, a collective member. Published by the same Bijutsu Shuppansha and manually distributed at the 1960 WoDeCo in Tokyo, at a price of Yen 500 per copy (\$1.39 at the exchange rate back then), it was widely circulated among architects and designers, both inside and outside of Japan, although only a limited number of copies were made. The manifesto launched the collective onto the international stage of design and urbanism. For example, Arthur Drexler, the curator of architecture and design at the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), attended the conference, picked up a copy of the manifesto, and later included Kikutake and Kurokawa in a MoMA exhibition in 1964, *Visionary Architecture* (Figure. 2.27),<sup>230</sup> where they were shown

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<sup>230</sup> For example, Arthur Drexler observed to Maki Fumihiko the following, when they met after the 1960 WoDeCo in Tokyo: "Japanese modern architecture is receiving global attention nowadays, but we had not been aware that [Japanese] architects are

together with architects like Le Corbusier and Frank Lloyd Wright. There, the Japanese architects showed works introduced in the manifesto, Kikutake's "Marine City" and Kurokawa's "Agricultural City."

With the mission of creating a system to organize cities under the force of human life, the collective manifests its active initiative in the creation of a new process of designing a city, and acknowledges the latest design and technology as a signifier of human vitality. The manifesto begins with the collective's objectives, as follows:

"Metabolism" is the name of a group, in which each member proposes future designs of our coming world through his concrete designs and illustrations. We regard human society as a vital process – a continuous development from atom to nebula. The reason why we use such a biological word, metabolism, is that, *design and technology* we believe, *should be a denotation of human vitality*. We are not going to accept metabolism as a natural historical process, but *we are trying to encourage active metabolic development of our society through our proposals*. This volume mainly consists of *designs for our future cities* proposed only by architects.<sup>231</sup>  
[emphasis added]

The Metabolists also intended to make the group itself metabolic in order to make their conceptual processes metabolic, and thus planned to replace the original members with new ones, although such replacements never happened in reality.

From the next issue [of our manifesto], however, people in other fields such

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uniquely displaying this much passion, and devoting this much energy, to city design. How on earth can we account for this mutation?" Maki Fumihiko, "Essay: Group Form" in *Kindai kenchiku*, 14-11 (Tokyo: Kindai Kenchikusha, November 1960) 64.

<sup>231</sup> Kawazoe, et al., *Metabolism: Proposals for a New Urbanism*. 5.

as designers, artists, engineers, scientists, and politicians, will participate in its production, and already some of them are preparing for the next one... In future, more will come to join “Metabolism” and some will go; that means a metabolic process will also take place in its membership.<sup>232</sup> [an emphasis added]

This ideal for metabolic membership almost took place. The photographer Tōmatsu Shōmei was present at several meetings of the collective after the manifesto was issued. He was invited to join the second issue, whose theme was to be “metamorphosis,” but which never came into being. (As was the case with most independent art publications at that time, this manifesto was the first and last document created by the collective itself.) In the special issue on Metabolism of a Japanese construction industry’s trade magazine in 2001, Kawazoe included a photograph by Tōmatsu, titled “Asphalt” (1960) (Figure. 2.28), and acknowledged that the photograph would have been included in the next issue of the manifesto as the only work created by a would-be photographer member.<sup>233</sup> This episode signifies the following two points: the collective was meant to be truly interdisciplinary, and metabolic in its membership (Tōmatsu himself characterized his would-be participation as a characteristic of the era of interdisciplinary activities (known as *ekkyō no jidai*); and Kawazoe took photography seriously as having the capacity to express the essence of the collective’s philosophy.<sup>234</sup> In the 2001 journal article, Kawazoe referred to Tōmatsu’s photograph

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<sup>232</sup> Ibid.

<sup>233</sup> Kawazoe Noboru, “Trace of Metabolists”( *Metaborisuto no kiseki*), *Kikan Ōbayashi* 48 (Tokyo: Ōbayashigumi, special issue, March 2001), 44-45.

<sup>234</sup> The author’s interview with Tōmatsu Shōmei, Okinawa, Japan, 21 May 2010. Examples of Tōmatsu’s then-ongoing interaction with artists and architects resulted in his participation in the 1967 exhibition, *Kūkan kara kankyō e* (from space to

as a document that evinces the city of Tokyo's metabolism at an intensely high tempo.<sup>235</sup> Later in the same year, the collective was featured in the entire November 1960 issue of the journal, *Kindai kenchiku*, where each of the Metabolists gave a detailed account of his own projects and was featured in a conversation among the collective members and Tange Kenzō. The issue thus served as an annotation of the manifesto.<sup>236</sup>

Motivated by the ambition cited above, the manifesto starts with a one-page photograph of the nebula (Figure. 2.29) that implies the organic and constant metabolic process of the cosmos and the world we live in. Each of the architects' design proposals is placed in an individual section in the following order, and each of them is preceded by an illustration by Awazu Kiyoshi: Kikutake, Kawazoe, Maki and Ōtaka as a pair, and Kurokawa. The manifesto primarily focuses on the work of Kikutake, Kurokawa and the Maki and Ōtaka pair, where Kikutake shows in thirty-six pages the two projects, "Ocean City" and "Tower Shape Community"; while Kurokawa shows in sixteen pages the three projects, including "Agricultural City" and "Urban Design for New Tokyo: a Step toward a Wall City."

The manifesto is filled with the architects' hand drawings and photographs of constructed models as well as photomontages of a conceptual city model and two fine art photographs (in addition to the photograph of the nebula discussed above.) They are a photograph of ocean waves (Figure. 2.30) by Hamaya Hiroshi, and a photograph of the Manhattan skyline (Figure. 2.31) by Andreas Feininger. These photographs are

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*environment*), and later the 1968 multimedia installation, *Electric Labyrinth*, organized by Isozaki Arata, the subject of Chapter 4.

<sup>235</sup> Kawazoe, "Trace of Metabolists."

<sup>236</sup> Additionally, in publications other than the 1960 manifesto, some of the collective members had a chance to explain further their design methodologies. For example, Kurokawa Kishō had a series of short articles titled "Techniques of urban design (*toshi dezain no gijutsu*)" in the January to March issues of the journal, *Kindai kenchiku*.

used to reveal in an abstract sense the philosophy of a design discourse that the collective members meant to create, although Kawazoe recalls that the photograph of the ocean was thrown in at the last minute to fill two blank pages.<sup>237</sup> Nevertheless, the photograph of the ocean, a close shot conveying the ocean in movement (with clear and visible movement of the waves) that occupies the entire spread, leaving no space for the sky, refers to the ocean as a site for the emergence of life or as a pattern of metabolism. In the manifesto's context, one could interpret the ocean as an incubation space for life and ideas, and could further compare it to Metabolism itself as an ocean-like space for ideas for a new city. The photograph is also directly related to Kawazoe's essay, entitled "Nature and Man," which immediately succeeds the photo and is about the need for architects to treat the city as a metabolic material. Andreas Feininger's black and white photograph, of a silhouette of Manhattan's skyscrapers that dissects the city horizontally and portrays it as a group of buildings against a hazy and cloudy background, visualizes the authors' arguments. This image, which derives from Feininger's 1954 photobook, *The Face of New York*, was made by drastically cropping off the lower half of the photograph. It showed a view of midtown Manhattan from New Jersey, including in the foreground some ships docked along the Hudson River. Either the architects or the editor cropped that half to convey the idea of the concept of Group Form. *The Face of New York*, which was popular among Japanese architects at that time, breathtakingly portrays the scale, texture and composition of the city. The chosen photograph represents a total image of "group form" as defined by Maki and Ōtaka, and reflects their effort to "conceive the form [of a city] in relationship to an ever-changing whole and its parts."<sup>238</sup>

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<sup>237</sup> Kawazoe Noboru, in an interview with the author, Tokyo, 2 June 2009.

<sup>238</sup> Maki Fumihiko, and Ōtaka Masato, "Towards Group Form," *Metabolism: the Proposals for a New Urbanism*, 56-7.

Kawazoe's position within the collective was nuanced and complex, because as a critic and theoretical leader of the collective he wanted to dictate the collective's direction. His position is expressed in a two-page spread in the manifesto, entitled "My Dream 50 Years Hence," which consists of three sets of his poems and artwork (Figure 2.32). In the poetry, he expressed his desire to become a seashell, a god, or bacteria in a future city, as follows:

"Watashi wa kai ni naritai" (I want to be a Kai, a seashell).

I am a seashell. All day long, I do nothing but open and shut my shell. It is really a wonderful world for lazy boys. Soon everything will be done by machines. The only work we have to do will be to dream. Suddenly I think of a wonderful plan.

"Watashi wa kami ni naritai" (I want to be a Kami, a god).

I hear a voice from heaven. I am a prophet or perhaps a god himself. I give orders to the architectural world to make "universal architecture" – four-dimensional architecture, for which drawings have to be cubic. Who will be an architect? Ōtaka Masao? Kikutake Kiyonori? Or Kurokawa Kishō? I am sure I am the one who can grasp precisely a four-dimensional space. I deserve to be a god.

"Watashi wa kabi ni naritai" (I want to be Kabi, bacteria).

Mad, dogmatic, and fanatic are the adjectives ascribed to me. It is not a good thing to be a god. Perhaps I stick too much to "myself." I have to throw away self-consciousness and fuse with mankind as its mere particle. I have to attain a state of perfect selflessness. Now I am a bacteria cell, constantly propagating myself. Several generations hence, the extreme progress in

communication will enable everyone to take a brain wave receiver with him, which conveys directly and exactly what other people think and feel to him and vice versa. What I am thinking will be known by all people. This means that the self-consciousness of individuals will be lost and the will of mankind will remain. It will be the same as the will of bacteria. The only difference will be men's capacity to dream a magnificent dream.

To underscore the wishes expressed in his poems, Kawazoe accompanied each of them with an image: Pieter Bruegel's painting (Figure. 2.33), "The Land of Coekaigne (also known as The Paradise of the Idle)," was for "I want to be a seashell," Jean Charlot's graphite drawing, "The Stone Engravers in the Mountain," was for "I want to be a god," and a pen drawing by Kawazoe Yasuhiro (Kawazoe Noboru's elder brother, who was an architect), "The Imaginary Drawing of a Space City," was for "I want to be bacteria."

These texts and images, which were originally prepared by Kawazoe for the May 1959 issue of the journal, *Kenchiku bunka*, in response to the journal's questionnaire, titled "My Dream 20 Years from Now," reveal Kawazoe's narcissistic and ambitious desire to be a leading critic in the discourse of utopian urbanism in postwar Japan. The tone of the texts can be interpreted as not only humorous but also anxious and possibly fascist. They could be construed to imply the possibility of nuclear war.

Bruegel's painting, for example, depicts a utopian state where people, represented in three men, could lead a life filled with material goods, freedom, and leisure time, doing nothing but eating, sleeping and dreaming. But it is plausible that the men are not slumbering but dead. The poem that accompanies the painting, "I want



to be a seashell,” refers to the title of a well-known television series in postwar Japan, based on a war criminal, Katō Tetsutarō, who was sentenced to death at the war tribunals for the crime of murdering an American soldier during the war, a crime he did not commit. (His sentence was later reduced to a lesser punishment and he eventually was released. His story was subsequently featured in a 1958 television series and a 1959 film, both titled, *I Want to Be a Seashell*.) Kawazoe’s poem does not directly refer to the program but merely suggests that a new era will arise where machines would enable humans simply to sleep and dream. Kawazoe compares himself to a seashell that does nothing but dream, but the title’s implied reference to the war cannot be ignored, and the metaphor of a seashell can easily be viewed as suggesting nuclear shelters.

His second poem, “I want to be a god” seems to be related to the content of the accompanying image: stone workers carving a stone under the direction of a god-like figure, who sits on another stone with his right arm pointing at one stone carver. In the poem, Kawazoe declares that he want to be a god able to grasp four-dimensional space to direct the Metabolist architects. Here, he reveals his desire to lead their efforts to construct “space architecture,” implying that such architecture could mean tomorrow’s empire.

In the third poem, Kawazoe expresses his desire to become bacteria. The poem reveals both his vision of Metabolism, and, in an apparent contradiction of the content of his second poem, his desire to be the collective’s leader by positioning himself to be selfless bacteria without any self-consciousness. The text is contextualized with the pen drawing of a space where a spherical pavilion is seen on the ground, surrounded by two tower structures with a plant-like system covering them. The drawing, by Kawazoe Yasuhiro and titled “An Imaginary Drawing of a Space City,” can be seen as

that of a space suitable for the aftermath of a nuclear war. Kawazoe Noboru's desire to become bacteria can be also interpreted as his desire to survive in such a post-nuclear environment. These sets of drawings and poems can suggest both the collective's and Kawazoe's imaginations for a bright future city and their anxieties over the possibility of nuclear devastation and its impact on humanity and urbanism.

Such a complex sentiment over the future also exists in the city plans proposed by Kikutake Yoshinori, the architect who receives the largest recognition in the manifesto. There, he begins his section with the drawing of a panoramic view of a city (Figure. 2.34). It consists of an enormously scaled and warped wall that consists of numerous spherical units and encompasses a large plaza that can be seen as a memorial site. In the background stands a pair of sword-shaped towers. The mood represented in the drawing is one of extreme serenity and solemnity. It conveys the sense of a new but tightly controlled city built after a nuclear catastrophe. Characterizing Tokyo in 1960 as a sickly, worn-out city with too many irreconcilable designs and buildings, it appears that Kikutake's city designs are based on a completely bulldozed field, *tabula rasa*. On the then-current condition of the city, Kikutake states as follows:

Tokyo, a huge city, is worn out with a terrible malady. She has lost proper control of the city, because of her mammoth scale. On the contrary, she is even trying to conceal her illness and to justify the present situation by depending on the adaptability of her inhabitants.<sup>239</sup>

Under this condition, Kikutake clarifies the goals of his designs in the manifesto and states:

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<sup>239</sup> Kikutake Yoshinori, "Tower Shaped Community," *Metabolism: Proposal for a New Urbanism*, 12-13.

The state of confusion and paralysis in metropolitan cities, and the inconsistency and lack of systematic city planning, is the focusing of this proposal...what we wish to uncover in this proposal is not the static relation between a growing city and its suffocated human population, *but the sympathizing correspondence of a new space with its human inhabitants.* (emphasis added)

Declaring the land to be a sickened territory, Kikutake brings his design away from the land to the ocean, as seen in his utopian floating community designs, first “the Tower Shaped Community” (Figure. 2.35) and later “the Marine City” (Figure. 2.36). These drawings led to his later creation of the design for another marine city. Based on these designs, Kikutake proposes a new urban plan, floating above the ocean, that he called “Unabara” (meaning, the ocean), as an example of “the sympathizing correspondence of a new space with its human inhabitants.”<sup>240</sup>

The drawing of his earlier Tower Shaped Community features the three shaft-shaped spherical mesh-surfaced towers (each tower resembling Chicago’s spherical two-tower Marine City apartment complex, designed by Bertrand Goldberg and completed in 1964) floating in Sagami Bay, across from downtown Tokyo. Appearing in the drawing are several low-slung, circular, plate-like floating structures, each of which was supported by a dozen columns, and a floating highway. Over the structures stands Mt. Fuji, and a sun rises in the east. Not only do the mountain and the sun identify the location of the floating structures but they also relate Kikutake to Tange in Tange’s fascist design proposal of the Greater East Asia Memorial building complex that was released during the war and won a competition. (It combines certain

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<sup>240</sup> Ibid.

expressions of Japanese premodern architecture and Le Corbusier's artistic and sculptural modern structure.) It is not a stretch to read this as indicating either the architect's admiration for Tange, or Kikutake's general attitude in the late 1950s towards Japan's prewar imperialism, and it may plausibly be construed as the young architect's interpretation of the notion of tradition. The towers are portrayed as if respectfully guarding the sacred mountain and the rising sun.

In Kikutake's tower design, each of the towers is comprised of a 300 meter-high cylinder (of a 157 meter-long circle) of 1,250 living units for 5,000 residents. The architect viewed the structure as utopian and "a 'Monument' of modern life to connect each community, and to relate architecture and city."<sup>241</sup> The housing units within the tower were to be made of steel because of its durability and suitability to serve the tower's residents during its 50-year lifespan. (For the interiors of the living units, plastics were to be used.) Kikutake argued that the cylinder-shaped tower could be manufactured like an airplane body at a factory and designed as a frameless structure to support "the power of a horizontal cantilever."<sup>242</sup>

Kikutake's Marine City later developed into another of his unbuilt plans, called the floating ocean city Unabara in Sagami Bay (an image in left half in Figure. 2.8). It is a small-scaled circular industrial city floating on the ocean, and it is equipped

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<sup>241</sup> Ibid.

<sup>242</sup> Kikutake was the most active among the group's architects in releasing his visions. In 1958, he built the legendary "Sky House," which was his private residence. In 1965, he released the Pair City plan, and in 1968 the Ikebukuro plan, the latter of which was based on earlier plans of his such as the Kaijō Toshi Plan, Kaiyō Toshi Plan, and the Tower City. By 1960, he had introduced the concept of "move-net," which is the prototype of the "capsule" concept developed by Kurokawa. Kikutake had thereby positioned himself as an image maker for the future city. Kawazoe, et al., *Metabolism: Proposals for a New Urbanism*. 15-6. Kikutake's earlier unbuilt plans, the Tower City and the floating Ocean City, led to the creation of his unbuilt Kaiyō Toshi Unabara. These first two plans had been already released in the journal *Kokusai kenchiku*, in its January and February 1959 issues.

with a wide range of built structures with functions (including control towers, harbors, habitation areas, administration blocks, protection zones, and exhaust pipes). It is a manmade island community with a population of 500,000, built 500 meters above sea level and 1,000 meters into the sea.<sup>243</sup> Kikutake contends that this island could prompt the existing industrial cities along the Pacific (e.g., Chiba, Yokohama, Nagoya, Yokkaichi, and Kitakyushu) to leave the shore and to become floating islands. Arguably these floating cities and their residence towers are not only extensions of the land but also units distanced from shores so that they would be safe from any possibility of a future nuclear incident.

Kikutake intends Unabara as a city to grow and multiply like a metabolic cell, as shown in his drawing that sets forth the evolution of the growth pattern of a city. Together with the photograph of the model of Unabara, the drawing suggests Kikutake's clear application of Metabolist theory, but unlike Kurokawa's designs, Kikutake's designs are not only imaginary but concretely investigate the possibility of actually building the proposed structures. As a matter of fact, his floating structure, though extensively modified and scaled down, was later realized as a mega floating structure, known as "Aquapolis," for the occasion of Expo '75, held in Okinawa, Japan.

Ōtaka and Maki jointly proposed in the 1960 manifesto the concept of *gunzōkei* (meaning, a group form) as a methodology to develop cities. The concept is illustrated in simple terms with several photo-based images (including the one by Feininger discussed earlier). That is to say, it is represented abstractly, aided by photography and words. Somewhat resembling the color photo by Moholy-Nagy of various cubic structures in his *Vision in Motion*, with its elaborate play of scale and light, the first image (Figure. 2.37) in Ōtaka and Maki's section in the manifesto

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<sup>243</sup> Kawazoe, et al., *Metabolism: Proposals for a New Urbanism*. 26-7.

captures a group of twenty-two unevenly spaced block structures. Exemplifying the photographs, in the accompanying essay, the architects argue that the group form “will not only strengthen the individuality of our visual environment but also endow the physical forms [o]f our world with qualities that truly mirror our rapidly changing society.”<sup>244</sup> They assert that such a form is distinguished from a “static” mega form, and note that its creation was inspired by the law and methodology of urbanism found in a Middle Eastern village that Maki had once encountered on a trip. Their concern is with a total image, an image of a group or multiple buildings, rather than an iconic single megastructure. Their idea of group form, they claim, “stands firmly against the image we have had in architecture for thousands of years; that is, the image of a single structure, complete in itself—for example, the Pyramids, the Parthenon, a Gothic church—or Seagram House by Mies Van der Rohe.”<sup>245</sup> Their idea stands also against “the other image of rendering an exquisite static composition that uses several buildings as its elements, for instance, the Hōryū-ji, the Piazza San Marco, Chandigarh, or Brasilia. In short, we are trying to surpass these approaches.”<sup>246</sup> They claim that the group form is “an intuitive, visual expression of the energy and sweat of millions of people in our cities, of the breath of life and the poetry of living.”<sup>247</sup> The concept of group form “is basic to the conception of the master form,” which “is an entity that is elastic and enduring through any change in a society,” and is “one of the principles of a more dynamic approach in urban design.”<sup>248</sup>

The pair’s heavy reliance on “imagery” and “visual expressions” can be traced back to their teacher, Tange Kenzō, who co-authored *Katsura*. At different times and

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<sup>244</sup> Maki and Ōtaka, *Metabolism: Proposal for a New Urbanism*, 58.

<sup>245</sup> Ibid.

<sup>246</sup> Maki and Ōtaka, *Metabolism: Proposal for a New Urbanism*, 59.

<sup>247</sup> Ibid.

<sup>248</sup> Ibid.

to different extents, Maki<sup>249</sup> and Ōtaka were members of the Tange Laboratory at the University of Tokyo in the early 1950s.<sup>250</sup> They both observed Tange's special attention to and usage of photography in service of his desire, two-dimensionally, to realize a vision as closely as possible.

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<sup>249</sup> Maki had a very different experience, as a young architect, from the rest of the Metabolism collective when he was in his twenties and early thirties. He left Japan for the US in 1952, upon completing his undergraduate architecture training at the University of Tokyo, studying first at Cranbrook Art Academy and soon enrolling in the M. Arch program at the Graduate School of Design at Harvard University, where he studied with, among many others, Josep Lluís Sert. Upon graduating, he first worked in New York City with Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, and then joined Sert's office where he worked on the design of the Iraq Embassy in Washington, D.C. After a few years of teaching at Washington University in St. Louis, he won the Graham Foundation grant, which allowed him to travel to Asia, Europe and the Middle East. During this two-year trip, he stopped in Tokyo, where he met the other Metabolist architects, joined the collective and later attended the 1960 WoDeCo.

<sup>250</sup> Maki remembers his time at the Kenzō Tange Laboratory at University of Tokyo as follows: "In Japanese universities, upperclassmen [in undergraduate studies] and graduate students pursue their studies in groups called *kenkyushitsu* (literally "research laboratories") organized around individual faculty members. The Kenzō Tange Laboratory...had a number of outstanding graduate students and was engaged at the time in preparing construction documents for the Hiroshima Peace Center, which had been the subject of a competition. From the time of my graduation thesis and during the short time I spent in Tange's *kenkyushitsu* until my departure for study in the United States, I was able briefly but intensely to be exposed to Tange's way of working on architectural and urban designs. Arata Isozaki and Kishō Kurokawa would also pass through Tange's *kenkyushitsu* a few years later.... Exploration into new forms of architectural expression – through the use of new materials, curtain walls, and large-span structures such as shells and tensile members – had been suspended for many years surrounding the World War, and was now being resumed at last. Eero Saarinen and Paul Rudolph were among the leading American architects of the time. Saarinen in particular had an approach to design very similar to that of Tange, and it is widely known that Tange and members of his atelier were keenly aware of Saarinen's work. Looking back after the passage of several decades, I find that, in its readiness to test out new ideas, Tange's *kenkyushitsu* had served as both the atelier of an artist and a laboratory of a scientist. The artistic side of design studies was then and is today well understood, but the scientific laboratory's mode of investigation required the existence of issues that could be clearly tested and resolved." Maki Fumihiko, *Nurturing Dreams: Collected Essays on Architecture and the City* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2008), 12-13.

In Maki's later essay, he explains that his inspiration of the group form concept derived from his memory of collective forms in Middle Eastern and Mediterranean communities (such as a village or a dwelling group) that he encountered during his world travel in the late 1950s. Such an experience is clearly observed in their urban design proposal for West Shinjuku, Tokyo.<sup>251</sup> To them, the notion of the group form presented "an alternative paradigm to the kinds of order that architects and Utopians had been proposing since the start of the twentieth century, based on enormous structures built on the scale of civil engineering works."<sup>252</sup> They found photography best suited to express the paradigm shift, resorting to the hybrid and abstract nature of their methodology, which was generated from their experiences of traveling and observing the cities.

For them, visuals, whether a base photograph or a drawing, were the key to their concept of group form. In the 1960 manifesto, they present an aerial view (a photomontage, combining a photograph and a drawing) and a side view of a group form of a campus complex (upper image in Figure. 2.38). They also include a master form of Tokyo's Shinjuku Station terminal complex (lower image in Figure. 2.38), which consists of office, shopping and amusement, and parking garage complexes, among other elements.

Instead of suggesting a detailed plan, they present a concept drawing incorporating a photograph to represent a concept that allows interpretations and imaginations. (Each of the models is given a paragraph explaining its concept.) For example, for the concept of "business town" (Figure. 2.39) represented in the

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<sup>251</sup> Maki wrote at least two essays on the group form, not too long after the trip. They are "Collective Form: Three Paradigms" and with Jerry Goldberg (who was a graduate student of Maki at Washington University) "Linkage in Collective Form." Maki, 28-29.

<sup>252</sup> Maki, 29.



photo-based image of two dozen simple block structures imposed on a simple master drawing, the architects supplement the concept with the statement that, “the business town requires a close connection with the traffic system and high density within.... [It] also requires all the conveniences of a modern city and at the same time a variety of vistas from the windows of the buildings. These requirements will be the basic principles for the design of the business town.”<sup>253</sup>

Kurokawa Kishō presents three city plans in the manifesto. They are “Agricultural City,” “Urban Design for New Tokyo: A Step Toward a Wall City,” and “Wall City.” The plan for “Agricultural City” (Figure. 2.40) consists of a photograph of the city model placed on a landscape model, accompanied by an elevation drawing of the city. The 500 square-meter community consists of twenty-five 100 square foot blocks, and accommodates 2,000 people. The city floats 4 meters above a rice field on the ground level, creating a double structure. All of the roads, water service, electricity, monorails for work and other facilities are found in the floating structure, which conducts “common handling and administering of agricultural works.”<sup>254</sup> The 500-meter square structure is developed around a shrine, a grammar school and a temple, and provides a wide range of services to the community. For workers, Kurokawa designs a housing unit in the shape of a mushroom, a three-storied structure with a wooden frame topped with an aluminum roof. The design of the mushroom house has a hybrid structure of *takayuka* (raised floor), and resembles the style of a prehistoric Yayoi house. This city design, for a community primarily engaged in rice farming, reveals the architect’s belief in design work for a community, which can be traced to his studies, during his early university years, with the Marxist theorist and architect, Nishiyama Uzō, at Kyoto University.

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<sup>253</sup> Maki and Ōtaka, 66.

<sup>254</sup> Ibid.

Significantly, Kurokawa's design proposals are extremely visionary and imaginative, deriving in part from his lack of experience at actually building a building. Often, a seductive use of photography (which has an illusion of a digital image), which effectively capturing the project's scale, makes the plan's model look highly experimental and even other-worldly. Kurokawa's city plan expressed in drawing, "Urban Design for New Tokyo: A Step toward a Wall City" (Figure. 2.41), would evince his visually-driven utopian imagination. As a solution to the increasingly densely populated city of Tokyo (in 1960, the city's population was passing the 90 million mark), which Kurokawa characterizes as "the biggest and most confused city in the world,"<sup>255</sup> the architect proposes to create a structure in the shape of a 31-meter axis above ground, consisting of parts that derive from structures that resemble those of a bamboo shoot or other plant, and which are named "the Bamboo Type Community and the Plant Type Community" (Figure. 2.42), respectively. (In the manifesto, Kurokawa traces each community model to the simple drawing of a bamboo and a tree, respectively, revealing his design inspiration and interpretation of evolution. These simple drawings resemble Le Corbusier's drawings, and make a case for the collective's focus on "life" as an inspiration for city designs.) Like the other Metabolists, Kurokawa sees the city as "eternally moving as a container of future life," and recognizes both that different parts of the city would decay at different paces, and that architecture needs to accommodate such differences.

Metabolism was the first architecture movement in postwar Japan that was promoted through architectural criticism. The collective's leader, architectural critic Kawazoe Noboru (who was 14 years junior to, and a theoretical ally of, Tange Kenzō), played a significant role in creating the genre of architectural criticism, locating the

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<sup>255</sup> Kurokawa, *Metabolism: Proposals for a New Urbanism*, 80.

collective in the tradition debate of the 1960s, as well as positioning photography as a bridge between Japan's premodern architecture and modern structures. (The tradition debate derives from Kawazoe's essay, "Dentō to minshū no hakken wo mezashite" (For aiming at the discovery of tradition and the masses) (1956), the origin of which can be traced to Hamaguchi Ryūichi's earlier essay, "Hyūmanizumu no kenchiku" (The Architecture of Humanism). In these essays, the authors maintain the position that it is human force (including nature) that creates design, the city and architecture. This argument lends substance to the principles of Metabolism. The argument also elucidates the nature of architecture and distinguishes between cities in Japan and the West. Kawazoe argues that in Japan, eternity neither currently exists, nor, as was demonstrated through the recent war, did either absolute value (i.e., beauty) or eternity ever exist: everything is ephemeral.<sup>256</sup>

The significance of Kawazoe's essay in the manifesto, entitled "Busshitsu to ningen" (Material and man), is twofold: first, he anticipates the possible occurrence of a nuclear war; and second, he believes that the universe is constantly engaged in the process of a life cycle, and for humanity to continue that process, trusting in nature, we should stimulate what he terms "the metabolism of nature" for designing cities through civil engineering that allows a city to coexist with the dramatic features of nature (such as mountains, lakes, rivers, plains and oceans).<sup>257</sup> He attributes his anxiety over the possible occurrence of a future nuclear war to the postwar development of the Japanese city, which "[has] disturbed the order of Nature."<sup>258</sup> He concludes that nature has retaliated against humanity and manifested the city's fundamental problems. He suggests, first, that we return to nature, and, second, that in order to achieve this return,

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<sup>256</sup> Yatsuka and Yoshimura, 46-7.

<sup>257</sup> Kawazoe, Noboru, "Material and Man" in *Metabolism: Proposals for a New Urbanism*. 48-49.

<sup>258</sup> Ibid.

we create a structure on a mega-scale in future cities.<sup>259</sup> Drawing an analogy between architects and scientists who are either “[t]o analyze a life down to the single cell from [those creatures] first born on earth, or to analyze the laws of nature,” Kawazoe concludes that, “the work of architects and designers gives things their form and shape” and that “architects and designers are responsible for the final form of the material world.”<sup>260</sup> Kawazoe contends that there would be “no fixed form in the ever-developing world” and an architect’s task is “to create something which, even in destruction will cause a subsequent new creation.”<sup>261</sup> To him, “something” must be found in the form of any city being designed by an architect; cities are constantly undergoing the process of metabolism.<sup>262</sup>

### ***A Plan for Tokyo, 1960 – Towards a Structural Reorganization***

We have drawn up a plan which will, we believe, change the old Tokyo in such a way as to make it capable of containing the new mobility and activity of the times. The plan calls both for the gradual reconstruction of the existing city and for expansion into Tokyo Bay—two movements which, in our opinion, will aid each other along.<sup>263</sup>

--Tange Kenzō

Not long after the WoDeCo, Tange paired the utopian urban development plans of the Metabolist architects with his own *A Plan for Tokyo, 1960 – Towards a Structural Reorganization*, contained in a small three-color pamphlet of thirty-three pages (Figure. 2. 3). The plan featured an enormous linear structure of a series of interlocking loops, expanding Tokyo across Tokyo Bay to the adjacent prefecture,

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<sup>259</sup> Yatsuka and Yoshimura, 48 and 49.

<sup>260</sup> Kawazoe, *Metabolism: Proposals for a New Urbanism*. 48

<sup>261</sup> Ibid.

<sup>262</sup> Yatsuka and Yoshimura, 49.

<sup>263</sup> Kenzō Tange, and Kenzō Tange Team, *A Plan for Tokyo, 1960: Toward a Structural Reorganization* (Tokyo: independent publishing, 1960), 2.

Chiba. Historian Yatsuka Hajime has characterized Tange's plan as "one of the most striking renditions of the crystallization of ideas and philosophy relating to certain trends in urbanism [specific to Japan] during the 20<sup>th</sup> century."<sup>264</sup> Tange unveiled his plan, with its visually intriguing photographs of the plan's models (Figure. 2.43), on television and in journal publications, in order to appeal to the general public as well as the national and prefectural authorities regarding the possibility of realizing the plan. For this purpose, Tange again saw photography as an extremely important tool, and he wielded it as effectively, but on a far greater scale, than he did with *Katsura*.

Creating a photographic format of his grandiose plan was important to transport and disseminate his radical idea of new urbanism. Beginning with a popular weekly magazine, *Shūkan Asahi* (Asahi Weekly), where he previewed the plan in 1960 with an article, titled "The Future City over the Sea: the Realization of a New Plan for Tokyo,"<sup>265</sup> Tange subsequently presented the plan on Japan's national broadcasting network, NHK, as a one-hour feature program in January 1961 (Figure. 2.44).<sup>266</sup> This was followed with introductions in two domestic architecture journals, first in the March 1961 issue of *Shinkenchiku*, in Japanese, and a month later in *The Japan Architect*, in English. Outside of Japan, *Architectural Forum* covered it in its September 1961 issue. In addition, Tange himself released it in English as a thin but visionary, three-color manifesto-like brochure, thirty-three pages-long, in March 1961.

With this visually intriguing and grandiose plan—a major departure from his designs in the 1950s, which were based on Functionalism (as seen in the Hiroshima

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<sup>264</sup> Hajime Yatsuka, "The 1960 Tokyo Bay Project of Kenzō Tange," in Arie Graafland and Deborah Hauptmann, eds, *Cities in Transition* (Rotterdam: 010 Publishers, 2001), 179.

<sup>265</sup> Kenzō Tange, "The Future City over the Sea: The Realization of a New Plan for Tokyo," *Shūkan Asahi*, Oct. 16, 1960.

<sup>266</sup> Kenzō Tange, and Terunobu Fujimori, *Kenzō Tange* (Tokyo: Shin Kenchikusha, 2002), 357.

Peace Center)—Tange revealed his full position in the next stage of his urban design, in a design based on the principles of Structuralism. There, he interpreted the city as a complex and multifaceted process and a living organ made of a series of exchangeable structures. In the plan, he proposed systemic principles, such as openness, mobility and adaptability, to respond to the city's needs as it grew. In the brochure, photography reveals the system underlying the city plan and conveys how it would enable the city to meet such needs.

In Tange's eyes, by 1960, the city of Tokyo, whose population would soon exceed 10,000,000, had outgrown itself in piecemeal fashion and was "in a state of confusion and paralysis."<sup>267</sup> It appeared to Tange that Tokyo had slowly stopped functioning in its full capacity as a city, as manifested in, for example, its packed trains and highways during rush hours. Tange attempted to learn the growth pattern of a city, from that of an organic body that often breaks out of a shell and grows in a linear direction. Applying this formula to the projected growth of Tokyo, which had started as a circular formation centered on its downtown base, he proposed to develop the city in an open system of linear growth, with multiple A-shaped structures on a civic axis (as opposed to a civic center) from downtown Tokyo, across the Bay of Tokyo, to Chiba.<sup>268</sup> Having observed that the "physical structures of the city had grown too old to cope with the current rate of expression," he searched for a new urban system to accommodate the city's further growth.<sup>269</sup>

Under these circumstances, Tange proposed in the plan a reorganization of the city with the following three aims: (1) shifting the city's organization from "a radial centripetal system to a system of linear development," (2) discovering a means of

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<sup>267</sup> Kenzō Tange, and Kenzō Tange Team, 3.

<sup>268</sup> Lin, 146.

<sup>269</sup> Kenzō Tange, and Kenzō Tange Team, 3.

uniting “the city structure, the transportation system, and urban architecture into an organic unity,” and (3) finding “a new urban spatial order which will reflect the open organization and the spontaneous mobility of contemporary society.”<sup>270</sup>

Tange initiated the Tokyo plan with his graduate students from the University of Tokyo, including Isozaki Arata and the Metabolist Kurokawa Kishō, based on a similar but much smaller study he had previously conducted with students from MIT during the academic year 1959-1960 (Figure. 2.45). The purpose of the Boston study was to create a series of mega A-shaped structures over Boston Bay.<sup>271272</sup>

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<sup>270</sup> Kenzō Tange, and Kenzō Tange Team, 10. The plan’s most notable feature was a central A-shaped spine that carried an elevated highway system, which consisted of a series of interlocking loops and spanned 30 kilometers over the sea. The spine started with a loop framing the existing city center of Tokyo, then extended out to the sea. The third, fourth, and fifth loops, which would be entirely over water, would accommodate a new civic center and a port. The subsequent links would be occupied by office and public buildings until the spine landed on shore again. The buildings on the spine took the form of habitable bridge trusses spanning gigantic service towers, which were arranged on a rectangular grid in 200-meter intervals. Beyond the fifth link, a number of secondary freeways departed from the central spine at right angles, connecting the main line to clusters of tent-like residential units that spread over the bay. These gigantic structures would serve as artificial grounds upon which residents could build their own houses. The whole plan was conceived as an enormous megastructure with a hierarchical arrangement of circulations and programs.

<sup>271</sup> Tange left Tokyo after he had signed off on *Katsura*. Ishimoto was in Chicago during Tange’s first extended stay in the US, and he recalls Tange’s visit to Chicago. While he was at the CIAM Congress and while he taught at MIT, he made meaningful and personal interactions with architects and theorists like Laurence Anderson (of MIT), Louis Manford, and George Kepesh. He also spent some time with Walter Gropius (whom he had met during his trip to Japan in 1954) and G. Gedion, and with Jose Lluís Cert, whom Tange had met in 1951, and who often came to observe Tange’s lectures at MIT. (In 1951, Tange was invited to the 8<sup>th</sup> CIAM Congress in London, where “Core of the City” was the theme and his Hiroshima memorial plan was discussed. His Boston plan was published as a small pamphlet in 1960 by the Harvard Graduate School of Design.)

<sup>272</sup> Tange’s plan was also a response to the initial concept of Tokyo’s urban development, proposed in April 1958 by Kanō Hisaaki, president of the Japan Public Housing Corporation. Kanō published a visionary concept for Tokyo’s urban development, shifting for the first time the city’s focus to Tokyo Bay. He called for massive reclamations between Tokyo and Chiba (two adjacent prefectures facing each

The visual effects of “A Plan for Tokyo, 1960: Toward a Structural Reorganization” are powerful. Indeed, they have created in the pamphlet photographs the impression that the plan was already realized. The publication conveys the scale and dynamism of the plan, through both the photographs of the plan’s model and the photomontage image of the city with the plan implemented. As the architect Ōtani Sachio, who had worked for Tange for many years, later pointed out, Tange thought that a well-taken photograph of a model could serve his purpose much better than a built architecture, and it could provoke more of an image of architecture, thanks to the assistance of light, particularly a fresh image of modern architecture and a design with lightness and intensity. Tange believed that, even when a model itself is often tiny, a photograph produced under excellent conditions can convey the actual scale of the architecture.<sup>273</sup> Although the exact scale of the photomontage image of the 1960 plan is unknown, the enlarged version of the montage (twice as tall as the architect) (Figure. 2.44), as presented on a presentation board, conveys the vastness and clarity of his plan, particularly when the architect stands in front of it. With close shots of the various parts of the structure, assisted by the plan’s meticulous visual quality and the

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other over the bay), to create land accounting for one third of the total bay area. Under the initial plan, an industrial belt, several residential districts, an international airport, and a large park were proposed for these islands. Collaborating with the Industrial Planning Committee, Kanō developed his idea into a more concrete Neo-Tokyo Plan in July 1959. According to this proposal, several artificial islands would be created for different uses, with the largest one in the middle of the bay serving as a city center. Lin, 140. Kanō’s proposal of filling up the bay was intriguing both to the public sector and professional circles because he was a pragmatic businessman, potentially capable of carrying out such a plan. His ideas particularly inspired visionary architects and urban designers, especially Metabolists, who embraced the idea and pushed it further. Ōtaka Masato, for example, published his Tokyo Marine City Plan in 1959, characterized by a horseshoe-shaped strip of reclamation along a transportation ring on Tokyo Bay. Lin, 142. Kikutake Kiyonori created his city designs in relation to Kanō’s concept, including his Marine City, and particularly his “Floating City of Tokyo” (1961).

<sup>273</sup> Fujimori Akinobu, “Sengo modanizumu kenchiku no kiseki - Tange Kenzō to sono jidai 2 - Ōtani Sachio), in *Shinkenchiku* 73. 2 (February 1998): 121.



enhanced photographic elements resulting from scale, lighting and shooting angle, the plan filtered through the camera lens was turned into something beyond the merely utopian, and one step closer to reality, thus showcasing Tange's mastery of photography as a way to realize his vision. The extremely seductive nature of the montage proves Tange's ambition for realization of the plan, and his belief in a photographic reproduction for closely conveying his vision.

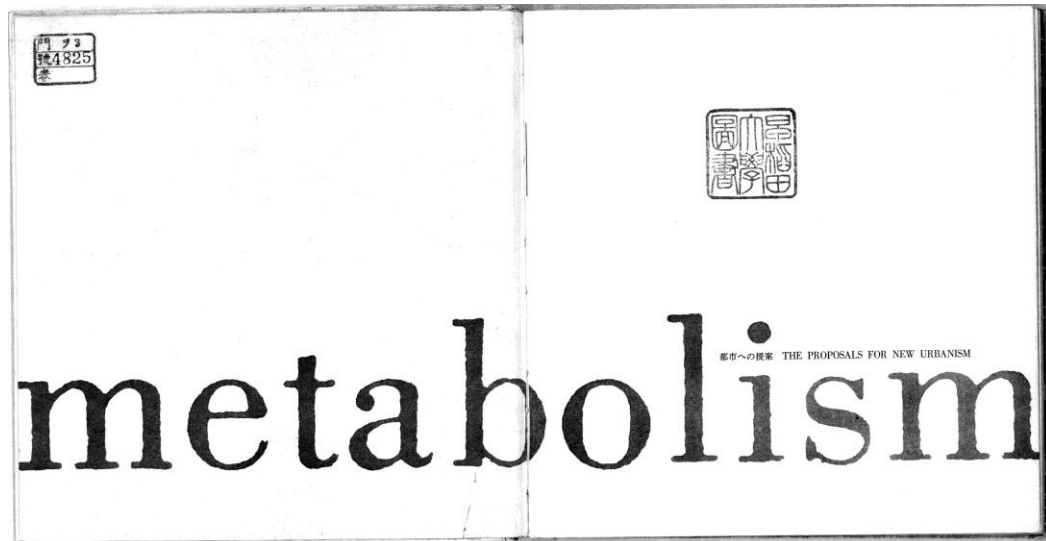
To create the aerial images with the plan (Figure. 2.43), it appears that a detailed model of the structures was superimposed on the photograph. Without use of digital technology at that time, it must have required a tremendous amount of time and detailed work to create the model, then place it accurately on the photograph for effective visual results. The photograph not only reveals the clear structure of the transportation and other systems but also visualizes how it would change the structure of, and interact with, the current situation of the city.

Importantly, the vast aerial photograph and model can be compared to the 1945 photograph of *yakeato* as seen in the August 1955 issue of *Shinkenchiku*. The dense and chaotic growth of the city (which Kikutake once characterized as "sickened"), now photographically reorganized with the introduced structure and plan, can be easily compared to the image of a burnt and bare field, the city's beginning in 1945 as seen in the photograph from the August 1955 issue of *Shinkenchiku* (Figure. 2.4). Within fifteen years after the end of the war, Tokyo, always in flux, had undergone numerous transformations and been the center of incessant imaginings.

The Metabolist architects and others revealed numerous possible future plans for the city. It was with the aid of photography (and, to a lesser extent, drawings), and particularly their ample availability through the circulation of images in book, journal, and magazine formats, not to mention their flexibility to be cut, montaged, or collaged,

that the collective's members were often able to look ahead and visualize their ideal urban space, and just as importantly, to reconfirm their conviction that the city is organic and has a circular life, while also dealing with their anxieties regarding another complete destruction of the city. After all, the architects took the liberty of inserting time in a photo-based work, the two-dimensional realm, adding another dimension in their imaginary work about the city, thereby blurring the division of the past, the present, and the future.

Figure 2.1



Cover page of *Metabolism: Proposal for a New Urbanism* (1960)

Figure 2.2



Cover page of the August 1955 issue of *Shinkenchiku*

Figure 2.3



*A Plan for Tokyo, 1960 – Towards a Structural Reorganization (1961)*



Figure 2.4



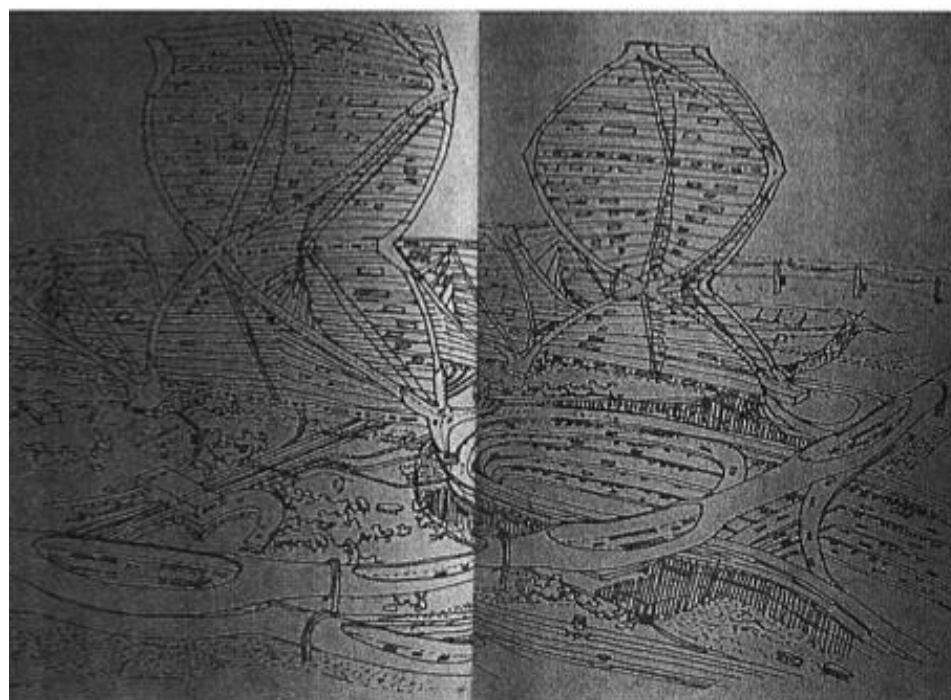
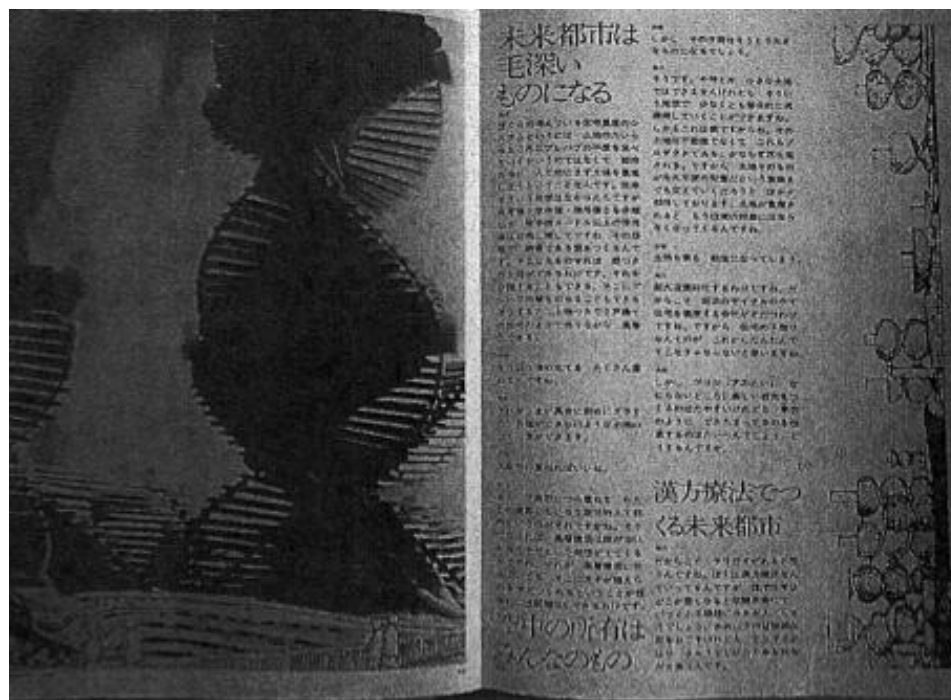
Aerial photograph of downtown Tokyo taken in 1945

Figure 2.5



Harumi Apartment (1958), Maekawa Kunio

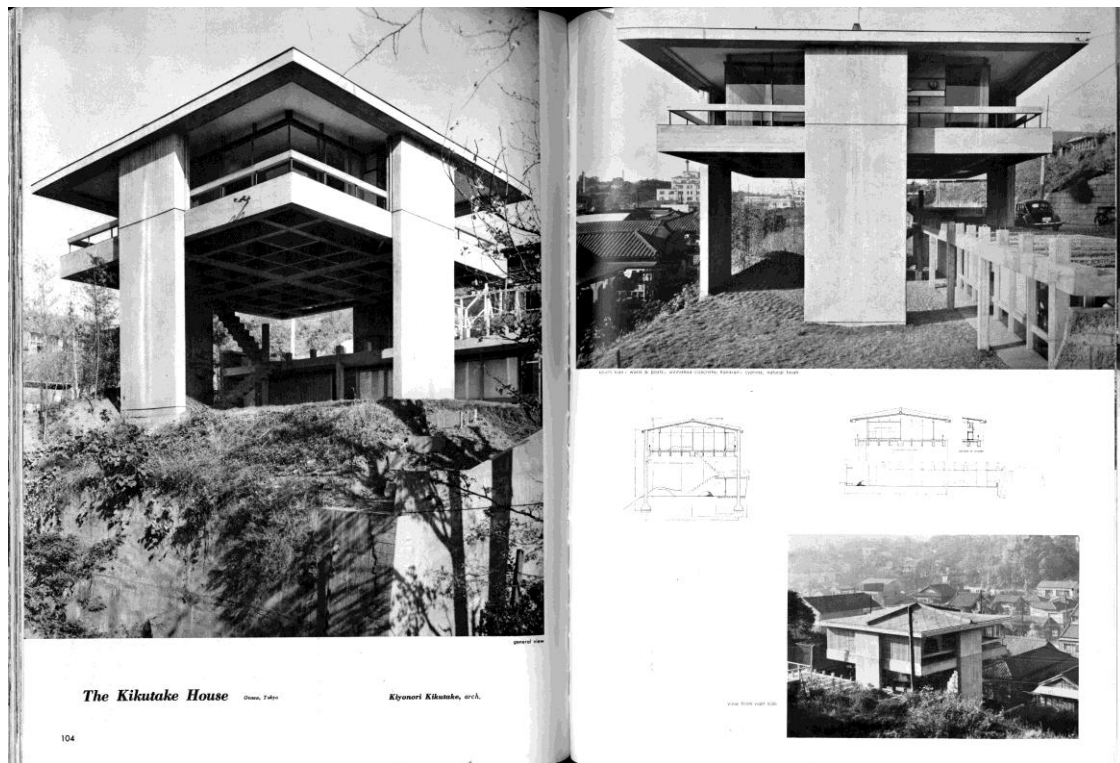
Figure 2.6



Kurokawa Kishō “Helix City” drawings (c. 1960)

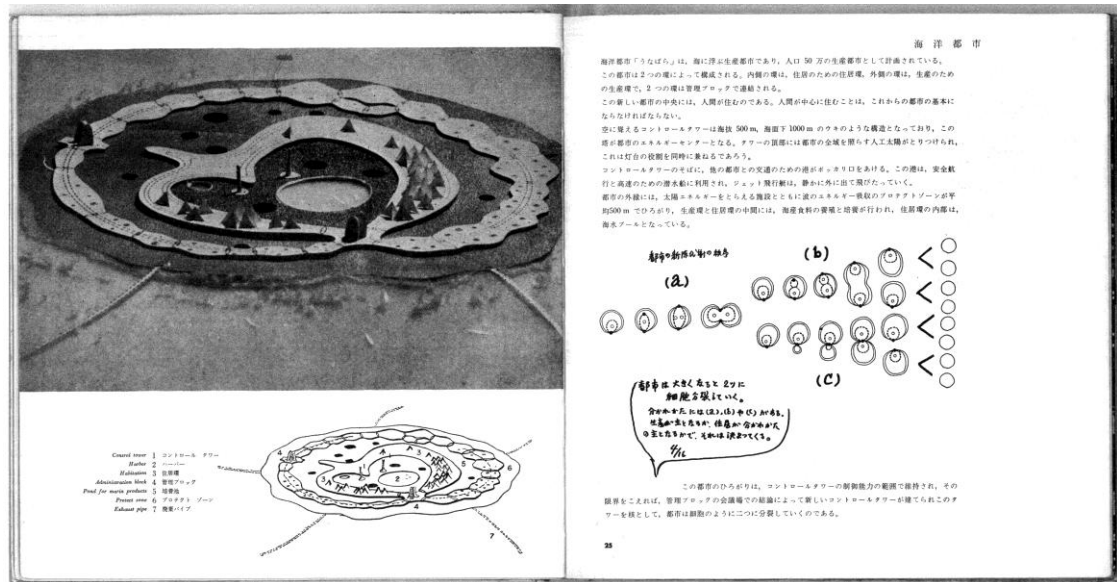


Figure 2.7



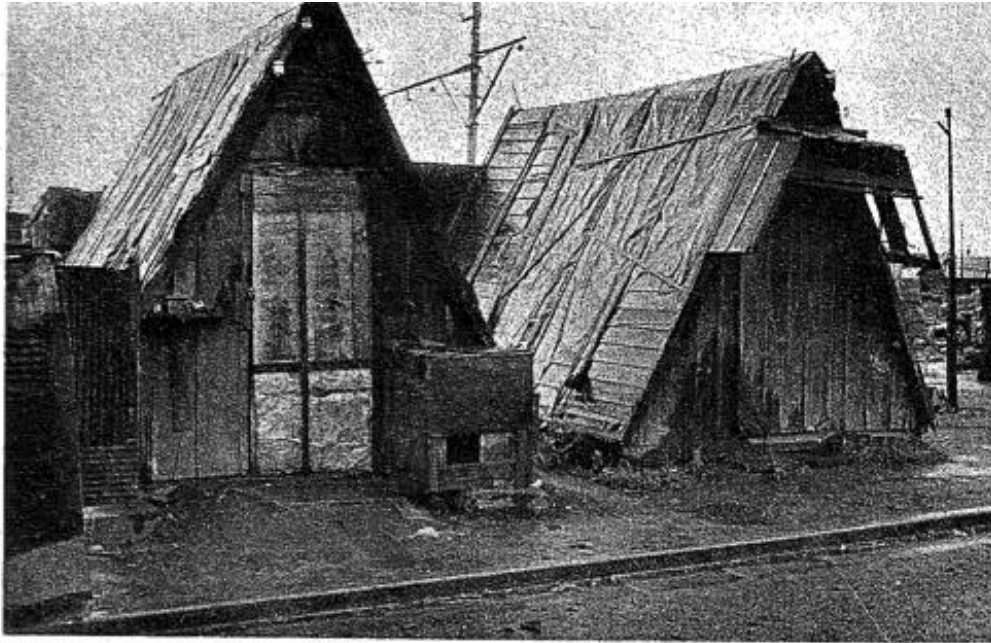
Kikutake Kiyonori, Sky House (1958)

Figure 2.8



“Of the Order of a City’s Metabolism” by Kikutake Kiyonori from *Metabolism: Proposal for a New Urbanism* (1960)

Figure 2.9



### 三角住宅で冬を越す

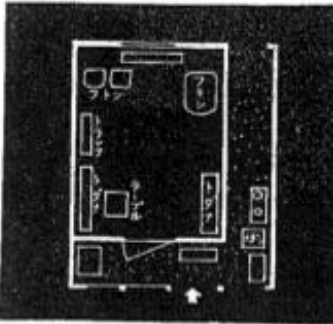
1845

戦野原に放りだされたわれわれが欲したものは、何よりもまずシェルター。それもわずかに断壁をしのげさえすればよかった。しかし政府はそれすら十分に与えなかった。8月28日、東京府内閣は45ヵ年計画を発表したり、朝鮮半島下関を宣伝した。それは全くの宣伝であつた。9月4日になつて、沿岸急務住宅建設を決定、戦争の遺物である木製飛行機や水産物の工場を撤去して、6坪の木造組立住宅30万戸を建設するという野郎であつた。各種の組立住宅の中には「ブレモス」や「森ケン式」のよう

に建築家の手になるものもあつたが、その生産の推進力は永として航空・造船関係の技術者であつた。

そしてわれわれがえたものは、あの三角住宅と電燈のパラッパであつたが、この建設もなかなか期間どおりに進ばず、冬を目前にひかえてあつた政府は、とにかく被災者・引揚者の収容のために、11月も21日になつてやつと住宅緊急増設命令を施行して兵舎や工具寮や焼ビルの転用をはかつたのである。

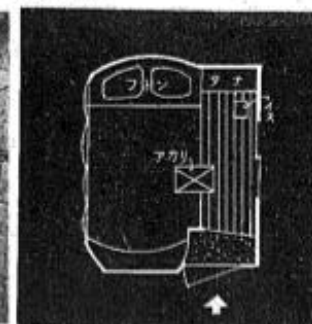
三角組立住宅



バス組立住宅



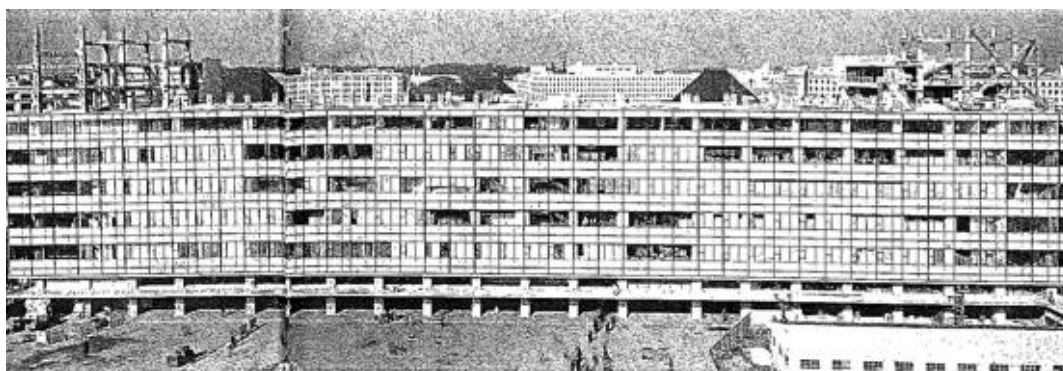
バス組立住宅平面



184

“Sankaku jutaku de fuyu wo kosu” from the August 1955 issue of *Shinkenchiku*

Figure 2.10



1952-1954

[illegible]

-37

The Tetsudo Kaikan Daimaru Department Store in Tokyo from the August 1955 issue of *Shinkenchiku*

Figure 2.11

# ジレンマに悩む

1955

## 42 万戸住宅政策のゴマカシと建築家

1954 年 12 月、吉田内閣は遂に倒壊して、鳩山内閣が成立した。国民は、新しいものに幾らかの期待はいただけたけれども、野党側を公認と主張する民主党内閣である限り、住宅政策についてはむしろ保護をせよと願った。翌年にせまった公営住宅第 2 期 3 ヶ年計画をひかえて、この 3 年間の苦い経験を応かそうとするきよやかな勢力が官公庁の技術者を中心とする住宅問題研究家たちの間に行われた程度で、建築界は不景気の波にもまれているだけであった。このような情勢の下に、住宅政策ブームが突如として起った。1955 年 3 月におこなわれる総選挙を前に、鳩山内閣は「大膽なバスター」というよりも「大膽をかつぐためにはきびミルタをーバイ」というわけで住宅政策を第一にとりあげた。国民社会党は、負けじとばかり、国営住宅建設でこれにこたえ、自由党までが「今度こそは」と意気込み、3 ヶ年 100 万戸をぶつ鼓した。かくて住宅政策は日に日に盛り上って、遂に 42 万戸計画とは相成った。

この間、建築家はたいていアタリと驚くばかり、専門家の立場から「住宅政策はかくあるべし」と政治家を啓蒙すべき絶好のチャンス。何かな



すとどろなく見過してしまつたのはまことに惜しい限りであった。もともと 42 万戸住宅政策は民主党政権が全くの新しいことで飛躍したアドバンスであつて、国民の賛成の力によつてきびき上げられたものではなくなつた。それ故、42 万戸の幻想で数億万の浮動票をかきあつめたにも拘らず、一旦政権を獲得してしまうと、今度は住宅政策が重荷になつてきた。そこで 42 万戸のつじつまを合わせるためにもつともらしい適当が張られたで出来上つたのが 30 年度予算の内容であつた。何よりもまづ「42 万戸は会館で建てて きし上げると申したわけではありせん。そのうちを 24 万 5 千戸は、皆さんが建てやすいように建ていろいろ思案を考へますから、せいぜいお建てになつて下さい」というわけである。なるほど国は意定なものである。それでは、国は残り 17 万 5 千戸をどんな風に建ててくれるつもりなのだろうか。

少い会で民衆建てのために、小さい安もの家を建てる以外に方法はない。そこで「会館住宅は、低収入階層にききわしい低家賃の住宅に重点をおくことになり。特に母子家族や新婚世帯の要請にこたえて母子家族や新婚世帯向けの簡易住宅 (5 坪) を相済民衆建設することとなり、「主婦連等の要請にこたえて増設部、修繕等に對して増設を行う」とこととなつた。つまり 17 万 5 千戸のうち 3 万戸は増設部を敷設に入れているのだから互換の簡易は 14 万 5 千戸、これを会館 5 万戸、会館 2 万戸、会館 4 万 5 千戸、その他 3 万戸の割で建設するわけだが、住宅問題者の過半数を占める低収入階層のための公営住宅は、先に述べた如く「小さく安い」住宅に切りかえられ、予算は 29 年度より 15% もきりつめられる結果となつた。まさに「貧乏人は災いし住宅」というわけである。

過去 3 ヶ年における公営住宅の平均面積は第 1 表の如くであつて、一般住宅の面積 (第 2 表) よりもはるかに小さい間におしとめられている。これが更に 30 年度においては平均より引下げられようとしているわけである。

第 1 表

年 度	27	28	29	30
坪 数	10.45	10.34	10.30	9.00 坪

第 2 表

年 度	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29
坪 数	9.8	12.4	12.6	13.2	13.7	14.7	15.8	17.3	17.7	17.8

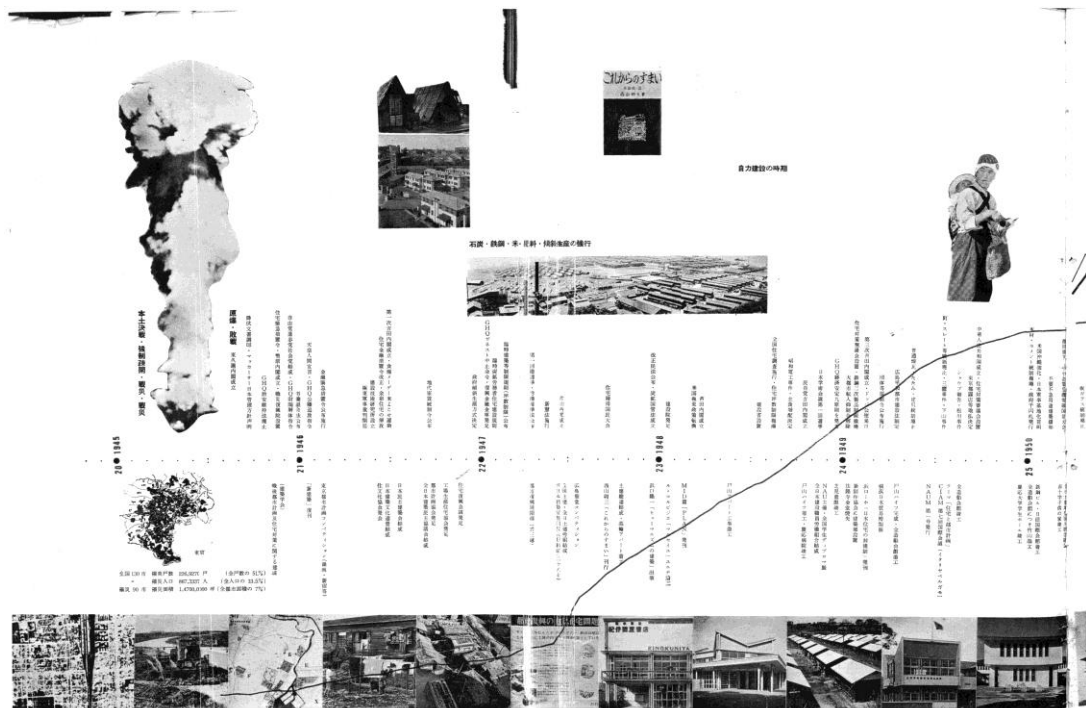
これではまるで不良住宅を建設するにひとしい。住居水準も何もあつたものではない。建築家は「完全に傾倒された」と骨のある建築家はブーイングした。そこで、建築学会や日本住宅協会その他 A の団体は反対決議を行うこととなつたが、住宅政策の奨励を歓迎すべき善の建築家たちの中には不用意建物制限でメシのくいあげたことを恐れて、このギャンブルの政策に對して強硬的に反対しようとする人は少く、気勢が上らないままに 42 万戸計画は国会を通過してしまつた。建築家の元々ものは、「不用意建物制限措置のとりやめ」位のものであつたが、どういふ形でしか建築家がききてゆけないのは惜しい開演ではないか。

このようにして「住宅政策ブーム」は建築家と無関係に、とんでもない方向へどんどん進みつつある。

終戦以来丁度 10 年、持てる人々の邸宅は、プロイヤー派、新日本派、数寄屋風と戦前以上の水準をほこっているのに、庶民の住宅水準は戦前のそれには遠かに及ばない。しかもなお、280 万という多くの世帯が救われないうままに、船賃の状態でとり残されておき、さらばまた、あの当時、半部にも救われた勢の人々が、間に合わせの低家賃のゲヤイとなつて再びまた住宅問題者の仲間に加りつつあるという現実。建築家はどの道を歩んでいるのであろうか。資金が、好むと好まざるとに拘らず、「邸宅」への道を歩んでいる建築家が大部分だとはいわざるを得ない。

建築物の大部分が住宅であること、建築家自身も低家賃住宅に住んでいること、そして、真の建築家は国民のために奉仕する建築家であるべきこと。これらのことを真摯に考へたならば建築家の進むべき道は自ら明らかになる筈だ。

Figure 2.12



First spread of the two-spread chronology in the August 1955 issue of *Shinkenchiku*

Figure 2.13



“Kenchikuka wa ikani torikunda ka” from the August 1955 issue of *Shinkenchiku*



Figure 2.14

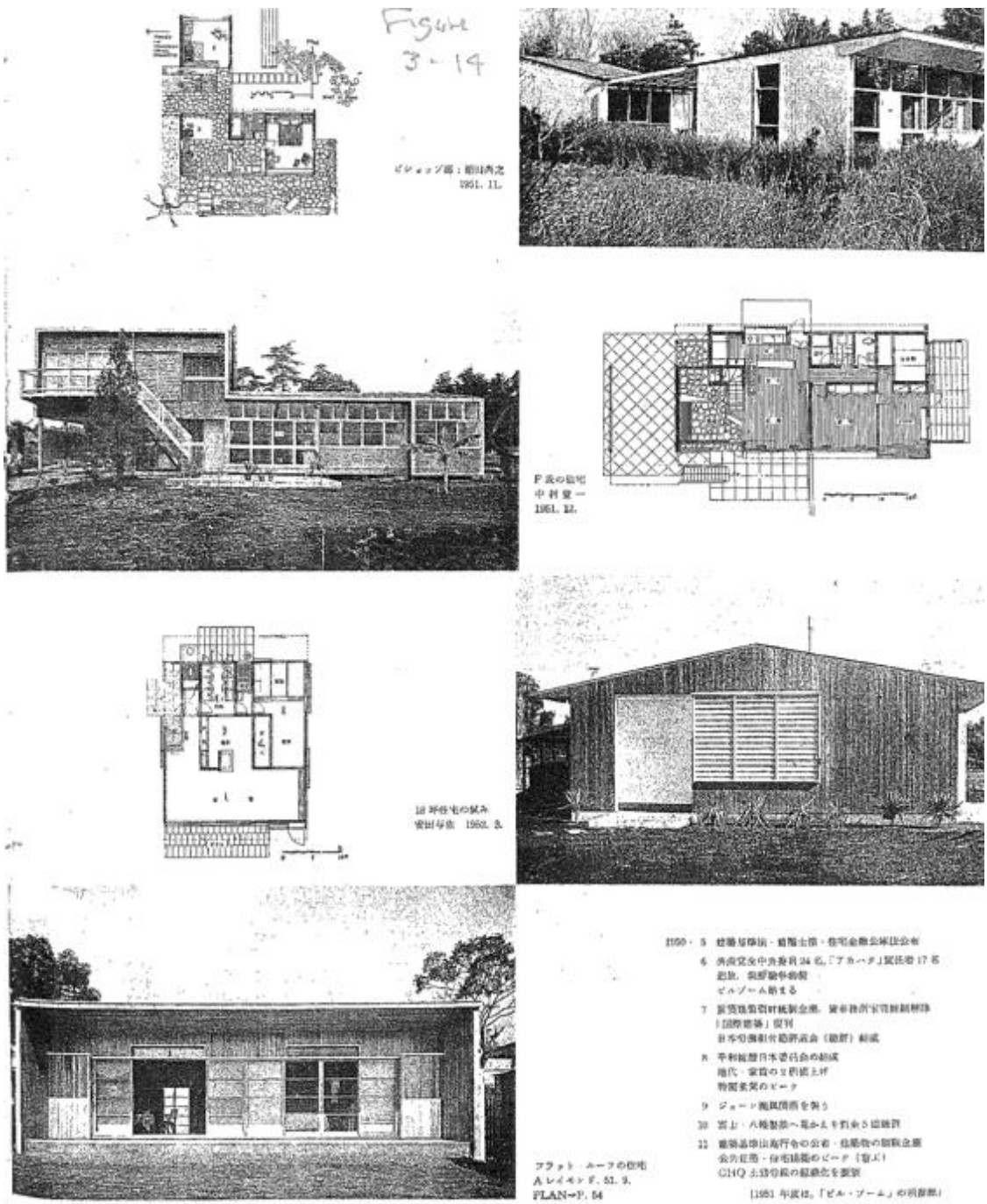


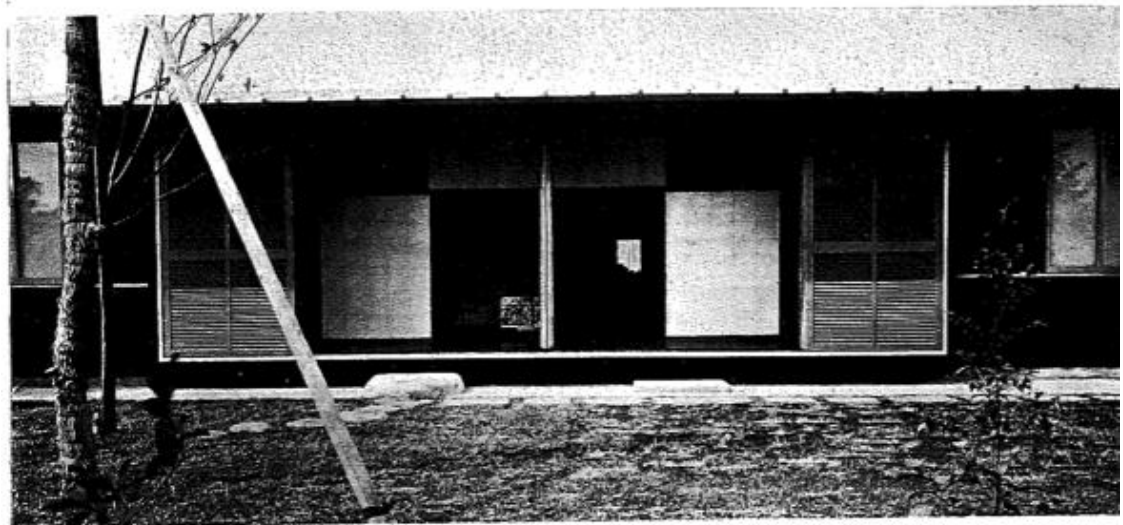


Figure 2.15



“NAU no hokai” from the August 1955 issue of *Shinkenchiku*

Figure 2.16



高松市：青 42

# よみがえる日本調

1951—1952

調和気分に浮び上る復古趣味



1. 堀口恭己：八幡館。 2. 吉村廉三：豊山館の家。 112
3. 清水一：松島邸。 4. 吉田五十八：海軍省三郎のテ。 314
- トモ
1951. 9. 丸・レイモンド：ラーダーゴダイジスト電気公社  
《新・関・文》読者賞：表紙十の年（第1）  
ビルブーム急激に下落  
サンフランシスコ関税同盟から《R》、関税物  
関税和泰約（40）151  
映画「関税門」でモリスで大賞を受く  
10. 物産調査団主催・新日本産業調査会（上野松尾）  
で堀口恭己、松口吉郎、新島繁を講師（→新・文・  
1952. 11）  
都市計画学会発表  
11. 明治産業：愛島農産物工（→新・1953. 2）  
不況不景大規模建築物の相対的縮減決定  
世界平和評議会議事録（→新・文・  
12. 高倉孝三：鎌倉近代美術展（文・→新・1953. 1  
第・21）  
1952. 9. 新島繁：すまいと事務所（新）広島平和記念館刊  
第1期3号第6巻、4→新・1953. 1）吉田五十八：新  
日本建築の復興発展。工芸館《新・関・文・第2  
文 72）  
スモーグ対策のジョージ  
2. 松口吉郎・イサムノグチ：万葉集（新）  
日本共同書局出版。日本行旅指定図書  
3. 関田孝三：13 坪の住宅（新）  
日経建築会雑誌工（→新・文・新・第6巻546）  
NAU：八幡宮神社新組合新築工（→新・1953. 10）

“Yomigaeru Nihon cho” from the August 1955 issue of *Shinkenchiku*

Figure 2.17

# 原爆時代と建築

原子物理学者と建築家との対談

武谷 三男

茂田 孝



現在は、原爆時代であつて、新しい意味の原子力時代ではない。原子力時代は、原爆時代を克服することによつてのみ、輝かしい未来を約束するであらう。

## 原爆時代と原子力時代

浅田： まず初めに原爆時代と原子力時代ということですが、この二つの言葉の間には相違があると思います。従つてまたある意味では将来の可能性というものを食んでおるし、またこの二つの言葉がそれぞれにわれわれの生活に、重い雲のようにおおいかにふさつておるといふような感じがするのです。特に建築家というものは、社会的な職分として自分たちのつくりあげるもの、いわば物質そのものは初めから存在するわけですが、その割合せとか割合とかをとおして、新しく空間世界を創造してゆく。その際、雨がいわば建築的な空間から、生活の空間、人間のほんとうの生活のウツリになつてゆくという自覚が非常につよい。そういう意味で自分たちの仕事は、日本で申しますならば、日本人の今後の生活の空間をつくりあげてゆくんだというように、かなり長い時間の見通しをもつて、毎日毎日働いておるわけです。原爆時代というものと、原子力時代というものが、科学者の目をおして、どういふように日本人の生活に、殊に生活空間に関連し、それからいふようなことを例えたいと思います。

武谷： 原爆と原子力の利用とは、物理学的にいえば両方とも原子核のエネルギーを利用するという点では、同じようなものですが、美観物理学者が長い間目的にしてきたのは、何も原爆や水爆で人類が破壊するといふようなことを断つてはいないのです。キューリー夫人とか、アインシュタインとか、マイトナー、ジュリアン・オッペンハイマー。そういう人たちの一連の大きな名前をあげて原子力というものが建設されてきたわけで、そういう名前をみただけでも、いかに物理学者が原爆などというものはちがつたものと考えていたかがわかると思ふのです。にもかかわらず結果は最

初にあらわれたのが原爆なんです。

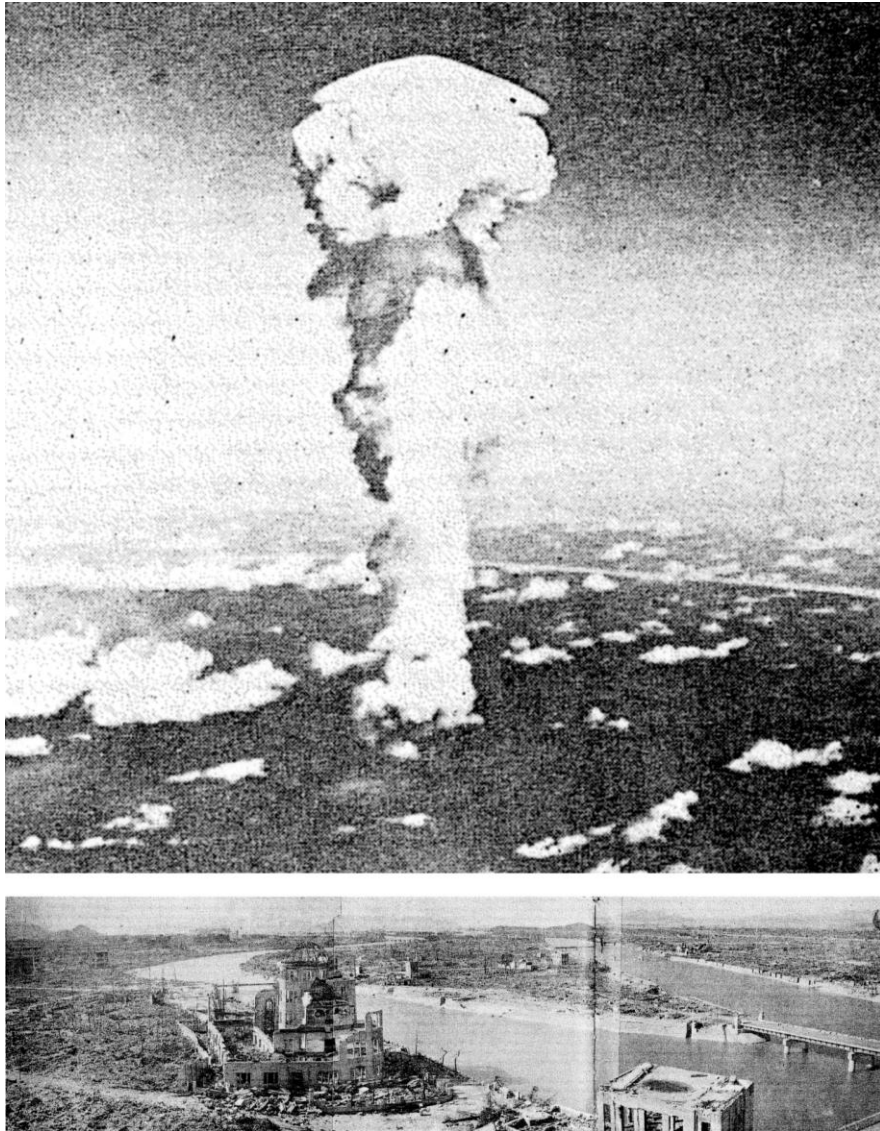
で、原子力時代と普通いわれており、これは原爆を含んでいつておりますが、そういう意味からいふとおつしやるように原爆時代と原子力時代といふのを分けるのが本意だろうと思ひます。

現在はそういう意味からいふと原爆時代であつて、原子力時代では決してない。原爆時代を克服しなければ原子力時代にならないということはたしかにいえると認めます。だからいかにして原爆時代を克服するか。果して原爆時代を克服できるかどうかということに現在がかつていてと思ひます。原爆時代を克服できなければ何もかもめちやくちやになつてしまふかもしれない。現在そういう情勢にあるわけです。

で、建築家は、おそらく昔からの建築がいろいろ残つておりますし、それから自分の苦心してつくつたものが烏有に帰するということは、決して望んでおられないだろう。烏有に帰するといふようなことは、建築家にとっては耐えがたいことではないかとわれわれは考えるのです。そういう点で日本の建築は、文明の遺産といふようなことからいふと、一朝にしてバッタができあがり、また一朝にして焼けてなくなつてしまふといふようなことが多いいですね。ほんとうの文明を築いてきたのだといふような感じがしないのじやないかとわれわれは感じるのです。その点外国の方がやはり長い間かつて建築物ができてくる。しかもそれがなおそうといふつて、なかなかおれないう。もちろんこんどの戦争ではいろいろな建築物がさんさんたる目にありますが、さんさんたる目にあつても、それをきれいに取りのぞくということが、何としても大変だといふ面がある。日本の

“Genbaku jidai to kenchiku: genshi butsuri gakusha to kenchikuka tonon taidan” from the August 1955 issue of *Shinkenchiku*

Figure 2.18



Images from “Genbaku jidai to kenchiku: genshi butsuri gakusha to kenchikuka tonotaidan” from the August 1955 issue of *Shinkenchiku*

Figure 2.19

A page from “Genbaku jidai to kenchiku: genshi butsuri gakusha to kenchikuka tonotaidan” from the August 1955 issue of *Shinkenchiku*



原爆時代とは、はなはだしく、インヒューマンなものである。したがって、原爆時代を克服することによって始まる原子力時代とは、すぐれてヒューマニズムなものが基調になるであろう。原爆時代を克服するための建設家の努力は、建築におけるヒューマニズムの追求にこそ其の所在するべきである。その点に於いてのみ、建設家は社会の進歩に貢献するべきである。

〔写真は長崎の惨状〕

かしてどういふ材料を供する消費者をみつけて、使わざなければならぬ。しかしそれを十分消費できるほど、原子力の平和的利用という段階は立ちいたっていない。それならばこれを消費してくれる問題を提げておこう。そうして将来原子力時代が実現すれば、アメリカが経済を行うことができる。そういうところが一つのねらいなんですね。それから経済的には政治的、軍事的なのです。しかし何も爆弾ウランを提供して原爆をつくるということではなく、双務協定をつくることによって相手国をしばりつける。また防衛機構の中に引き入れておくことが、一つのねらいなんですね。

渡田： 一種の権力関係の維持ということを目のしるおわけですね。武谷： そうです。それにアメリカでは原子力の平和的利用のプランでは英ソに遅れている。しかし原爆材料としてウランは独逸の国より一帯たくさん持っている。そこにもものをいわせる必要がある。そういう複雑な意味があるのです。原子力の活用ということは別に然し追った問題でもないのに、アメリカも使おうという。日本も使おうとしている。われわれは尚ほ疑いをかけるのです。そうしてあわてて双務協定を結びたいと四方がいつておるということは、実に奇妙な筋なんですね。

渡田： お話を伺って非常に深刻的印象をうけました。

武谷： それは原子力とは無関係の問題なのです。そういうことが現在おし進められている。これはやはり原水爆時代というものの影であつて、現在の平和的利用という呼び聲も、原水爆をめぐって一つのあらわれです。だからわれわれは3原則を守ることが、まじめに原子力を開発させることのできる唯一の最低条件であるというように考へておるわけです。

渡田： いまのお話を伺って非常に面白いと思いましたが、建築の方でもノールウェイ、スウェーデンというところの建築は、非常に国民の生活に密着して結びついておつて、階層は階層としておられおる。また建築的な解決は建築的な解決として、国民多数の非常に広い部分に響いておるようについておられます。なるほど現在の建築の理想的な、精神的なピークはアメリカに出ておりますが、それがほんとうの意味で国民生活に結びついておるのは、いまのところスウェーデンだといわれておるのです。

武谷： 実際現在原子力について理想的にいえば、われわれとしては小国主義というものが可成ある。原子力の平和的利用という点では、小国が大國を、将来原子力の精神においては指導するのではないだろうか。要するにその可能性があるというふうに思ふのです。現在日本は自衛隊をすて大國の視野にかじりついたところですが、原子力では本邦は小國が大國を指導するやうな立場に立ちうる筈です。小國が真面目ならその役目は、将来無限大になるのではなからうかと、みておるわけなんです。

大國はあまりに軍事的な面支配されすぎである。特に原子力においてはそうなんです。大國が原子力を破壊しておるのは軍事的利用である。ソ連はどうなつておるかわかりませんが、やはりあつても原子爆弾をつくつておるかぎり、3原則が守られるはずはない。ソ連は原子力をいい方向に進めよう、平和的利用の方向に大いに進めようという望みはもつておる國らしい。そういうことは考えられますが、原子爆弾をつくつておるかぎり、われわれの原子力についての理想である3原則というものとは実現しにくい。その点小國は原子爆弾をつくる必要もない。そういう点でいけば原子力について理想的な線を出し得るわけですね。

渡田： そうしますといまのお話で大体家でもお解がいきましたが、原子爆弾時代の克服によって原子力時代は始まる可能性はある。むしろ原子力にエネルギーというものの完成で国民生活と結びついておる。幾層される原子力時代といつても、そう革命的な言葉の持つやうな影響を現実的に及ぼすのではなくて、むしろ社会的総生産の基礎になるエネルギーの集中化という点を通じて初めて富強に再化されてゆくであろうというふう

武谷： そういうことですね。

A page from “Genbaku jidai to kenchiku: genshi butsuri gakusha to kenchikuka tonotaidan” from the August 1955 issue of *Shinkenchiku*

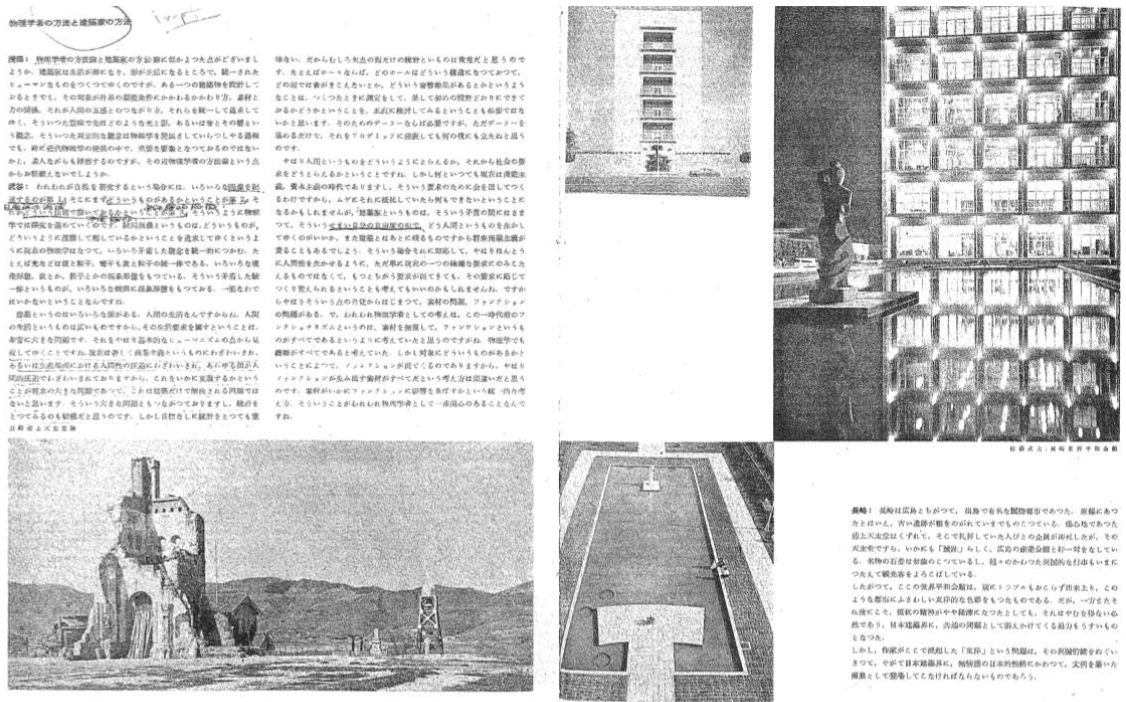
Figure 2.20



Images from "Genbaku jidai to kenchiku: genshi butsuri gakusha to kenchikuka tono taidan" from the August 1955 issue of *Shinkenchiku*

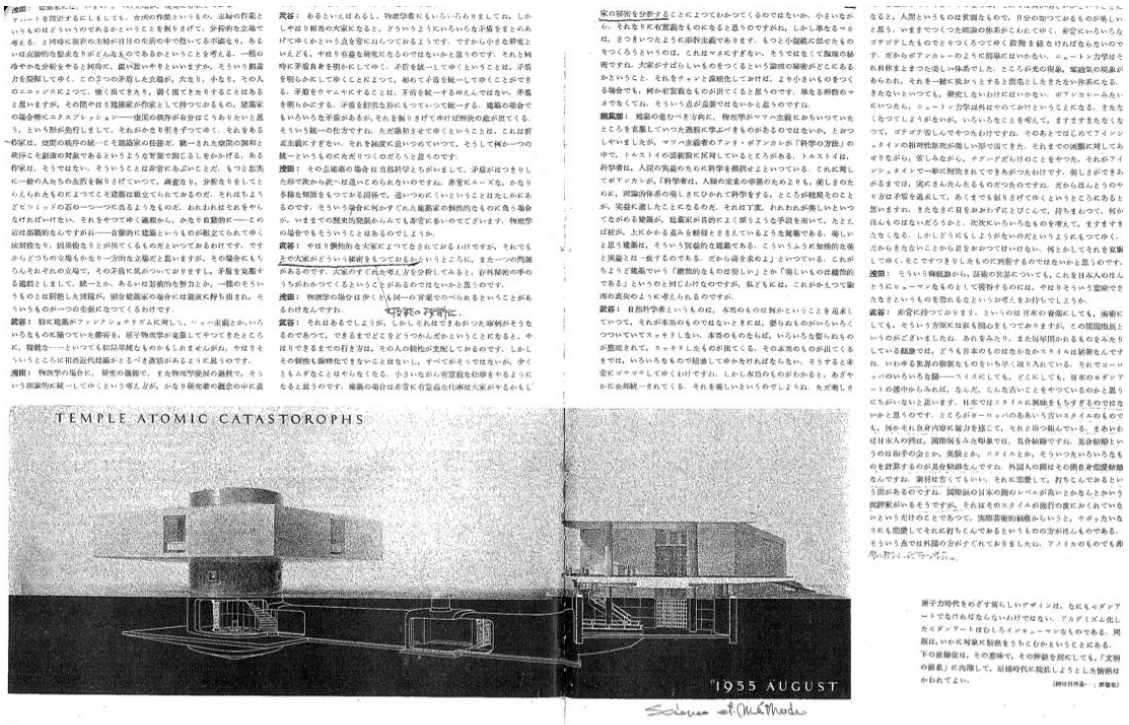


Figure 2.21



Spread from the August 1955 issue of *Shinkenchiku*

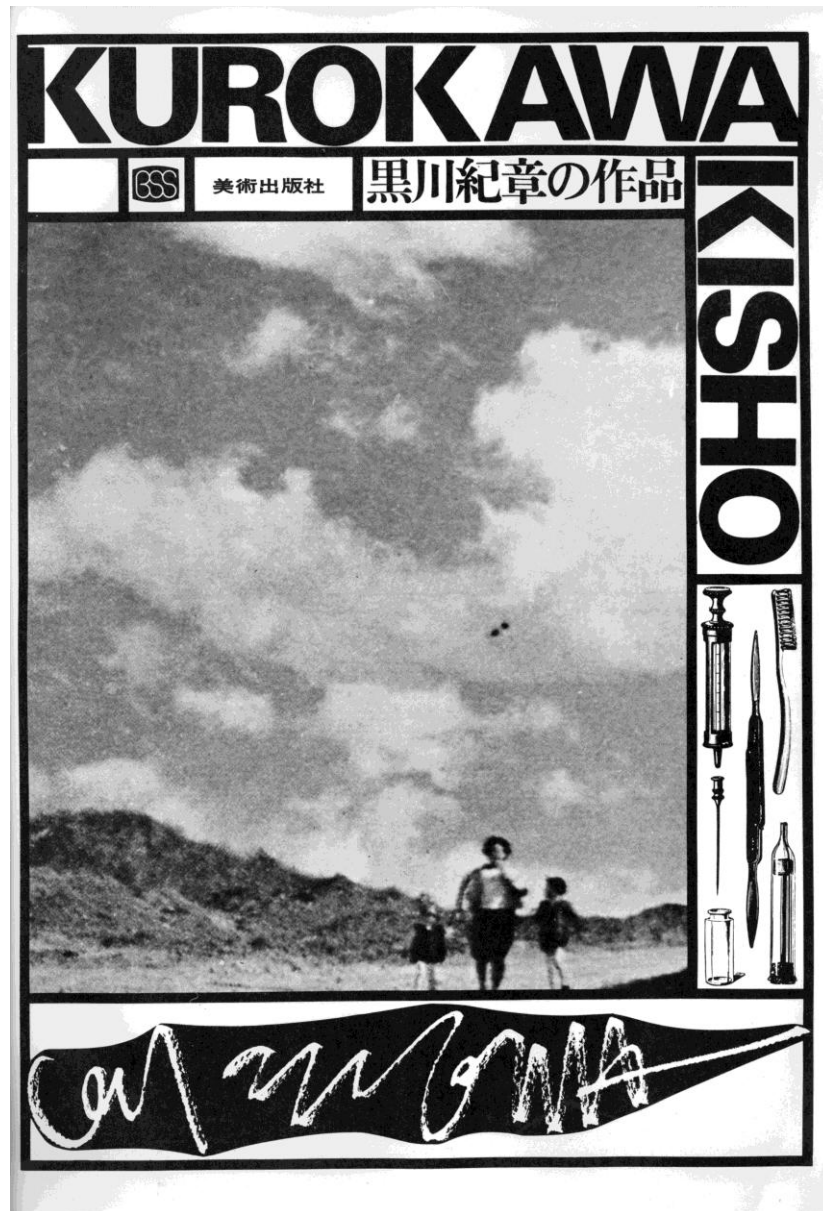
Figure 2.22



Spread from the August 1955 issue of *Shinkenchiku*



Figure 2.23



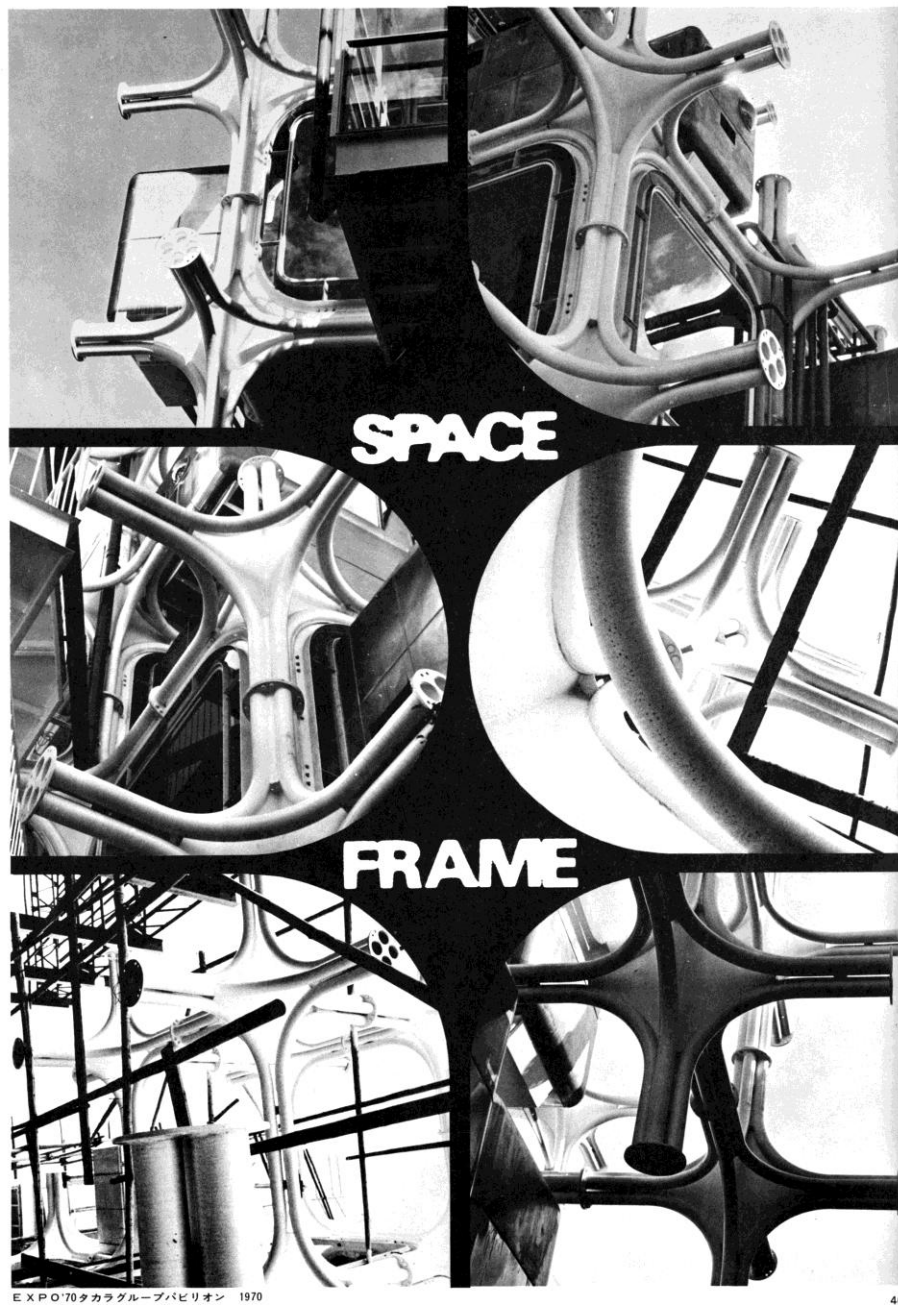
Cover page of *Kurokawa Kishō no Sakushin* (1970)

Figure 2.24



Photomontage by Kurokawa Kishō (c. 1960)

Figure 2.25



Takara Beauty Pavilion designed by Kurokawa Kishō, the 1970 World Expo

Figure 2.26

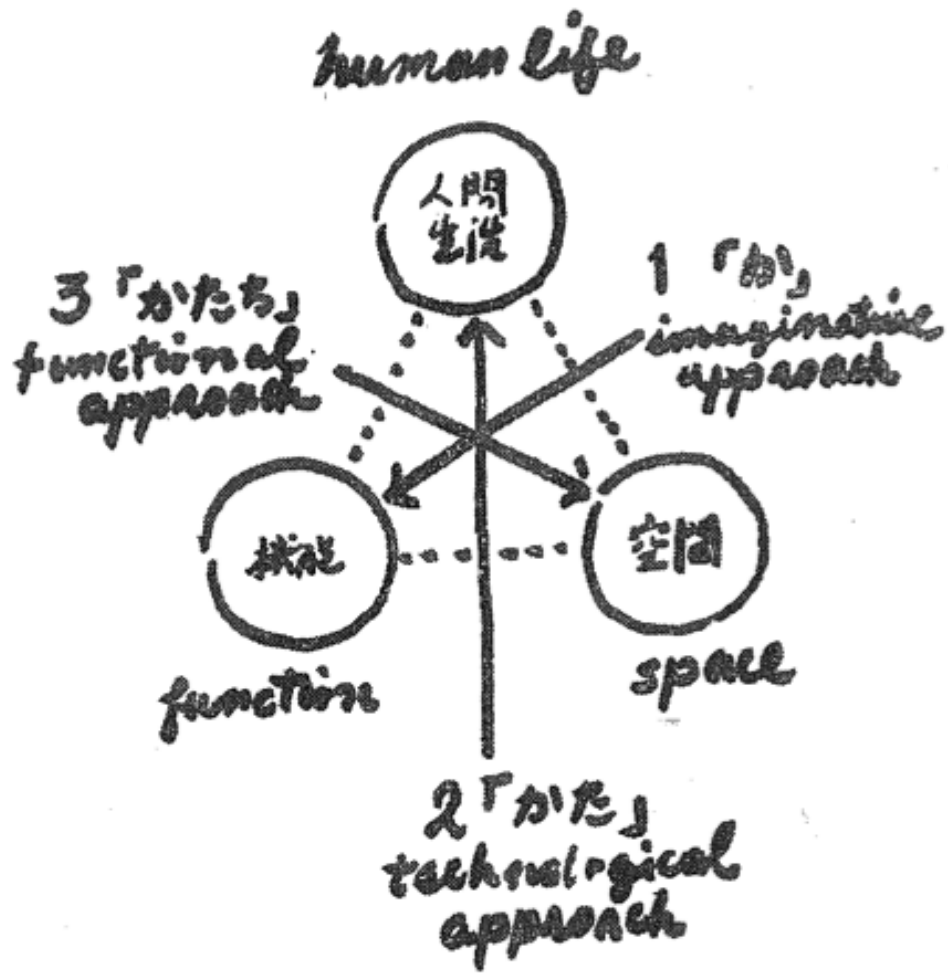


Diagram of "ka, kata, katachi" in *Taisha kenchiku-ron* (1969)  
by Kikutake Kiyonori

Figure 2.27



Installation photographs of the 1964 exhibition *Visionary Architecture* at the Museum of Modern Art, New York

Figure 2.28

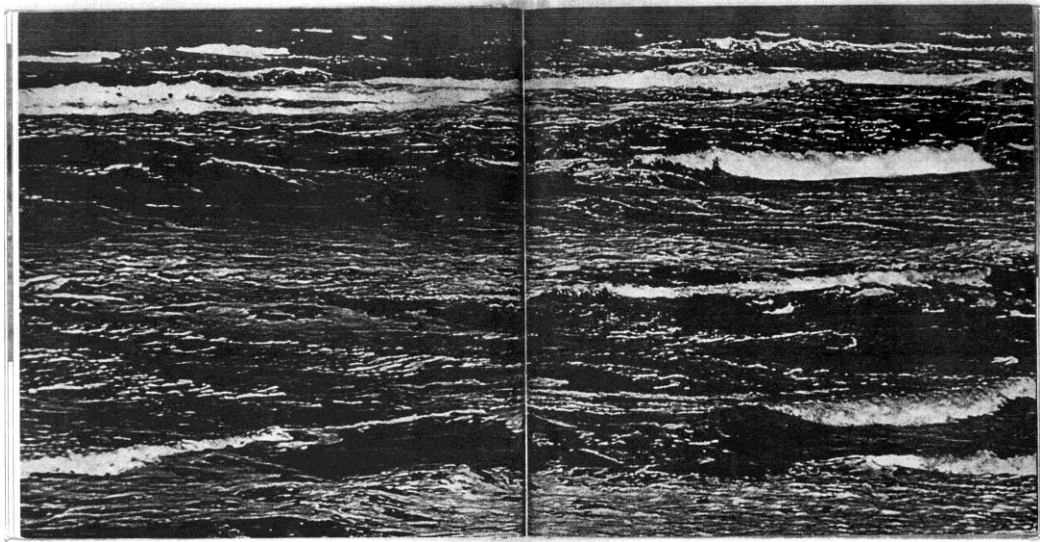
See Figure [number] for Tomatsu Shomei's photograph

Figure 2.29



Page from *Metabolism: Proposal for a New Urbanism* (1960)

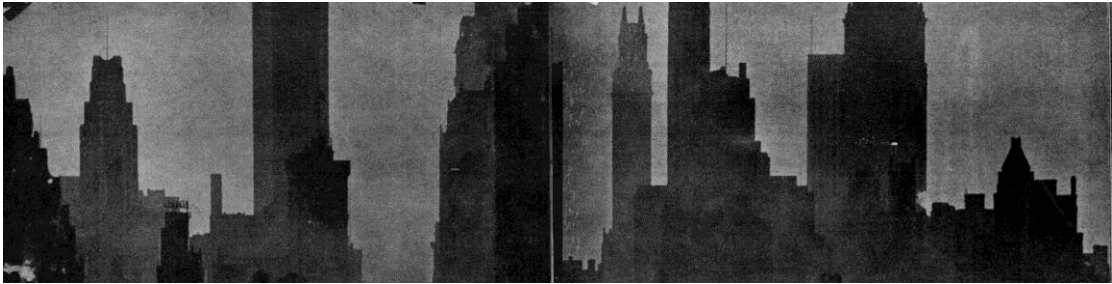
Figure 2.30



Photograph (c. 1955) by Hamaya Hiroshi from *Metabolism: Proposal for a New Urbanism* (1960)



Figure 2.31



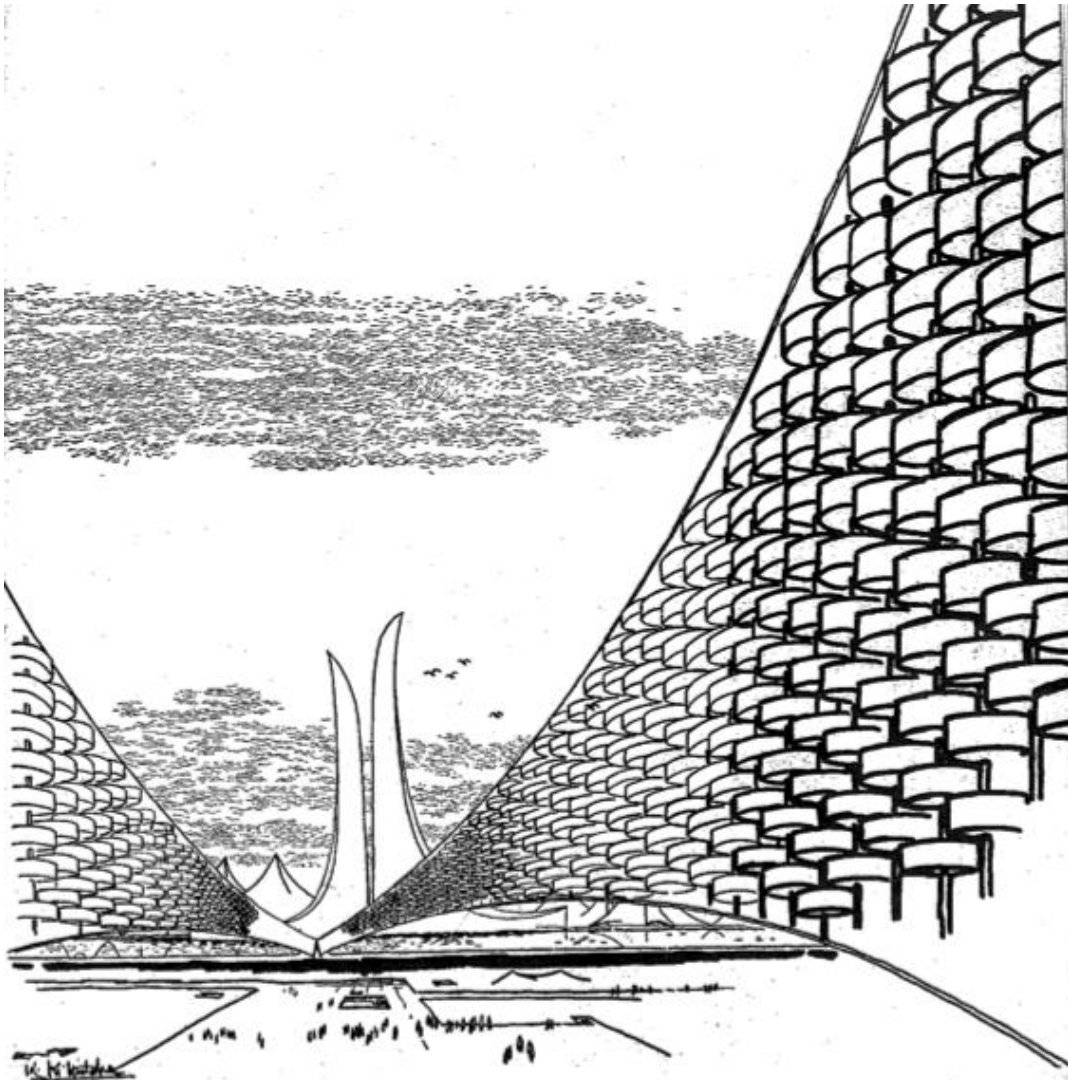
Photograph by Andre Feininger as appeared in *Metabolism: Proposal for a New Urbanism* (1960)

Figure 2.33



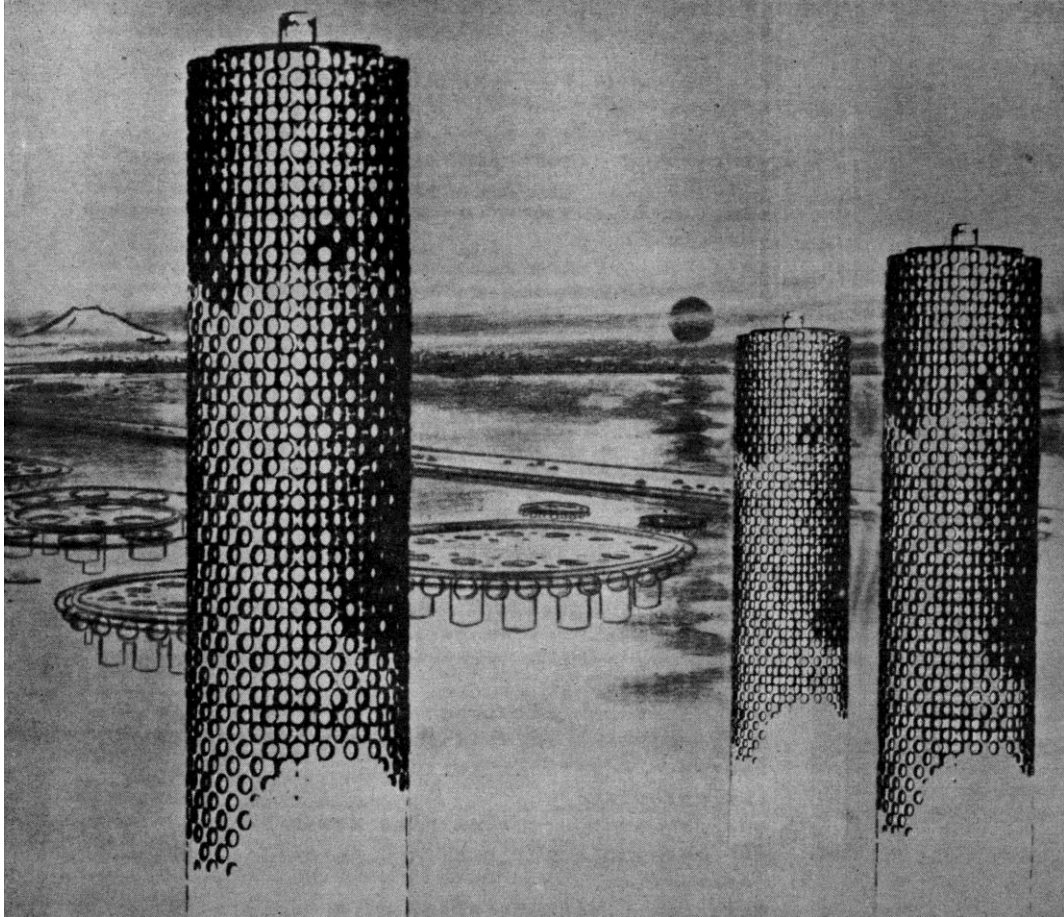
“The Paradise of the Idle” by Pieter Bruegel (year)

Figure 2.34



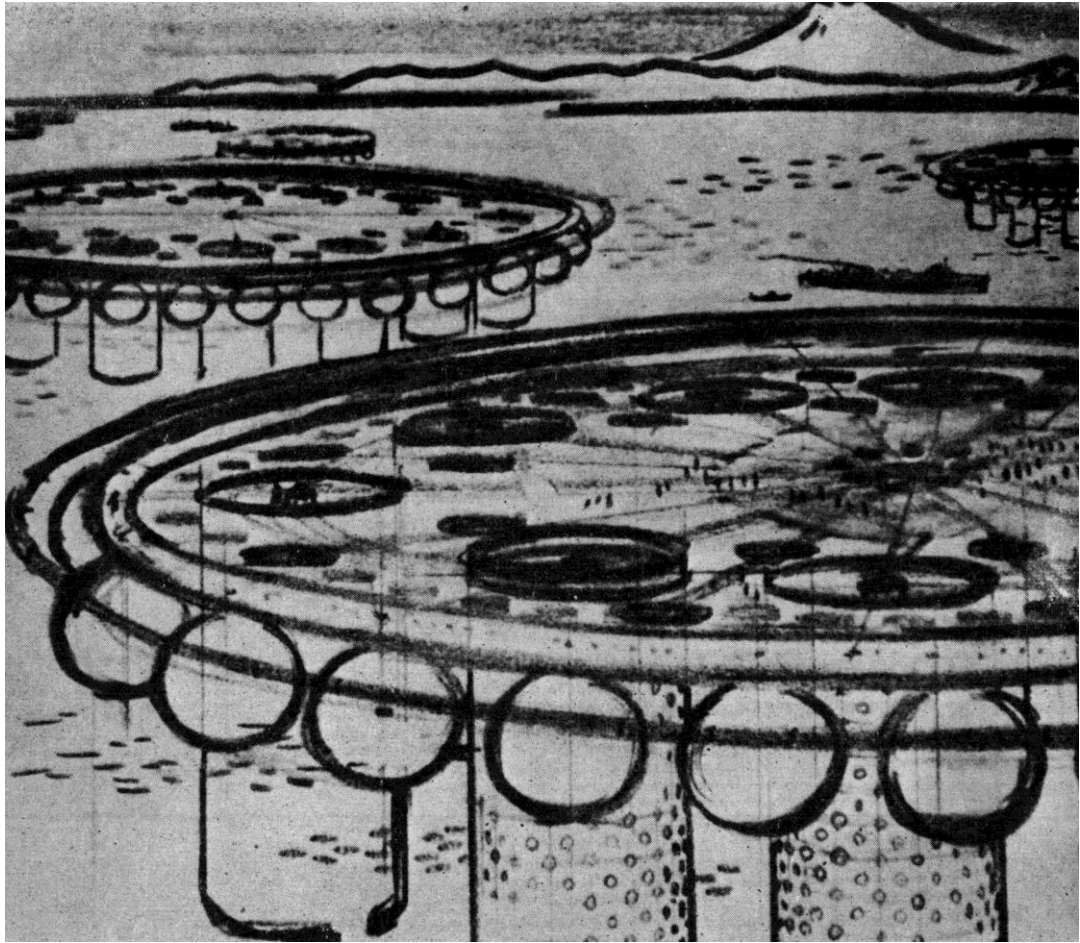
Untitled drawing by Kikutake Kiyonori from *Metabolism: Proposal for a New Urbanism* (1960)

Figure 2.35



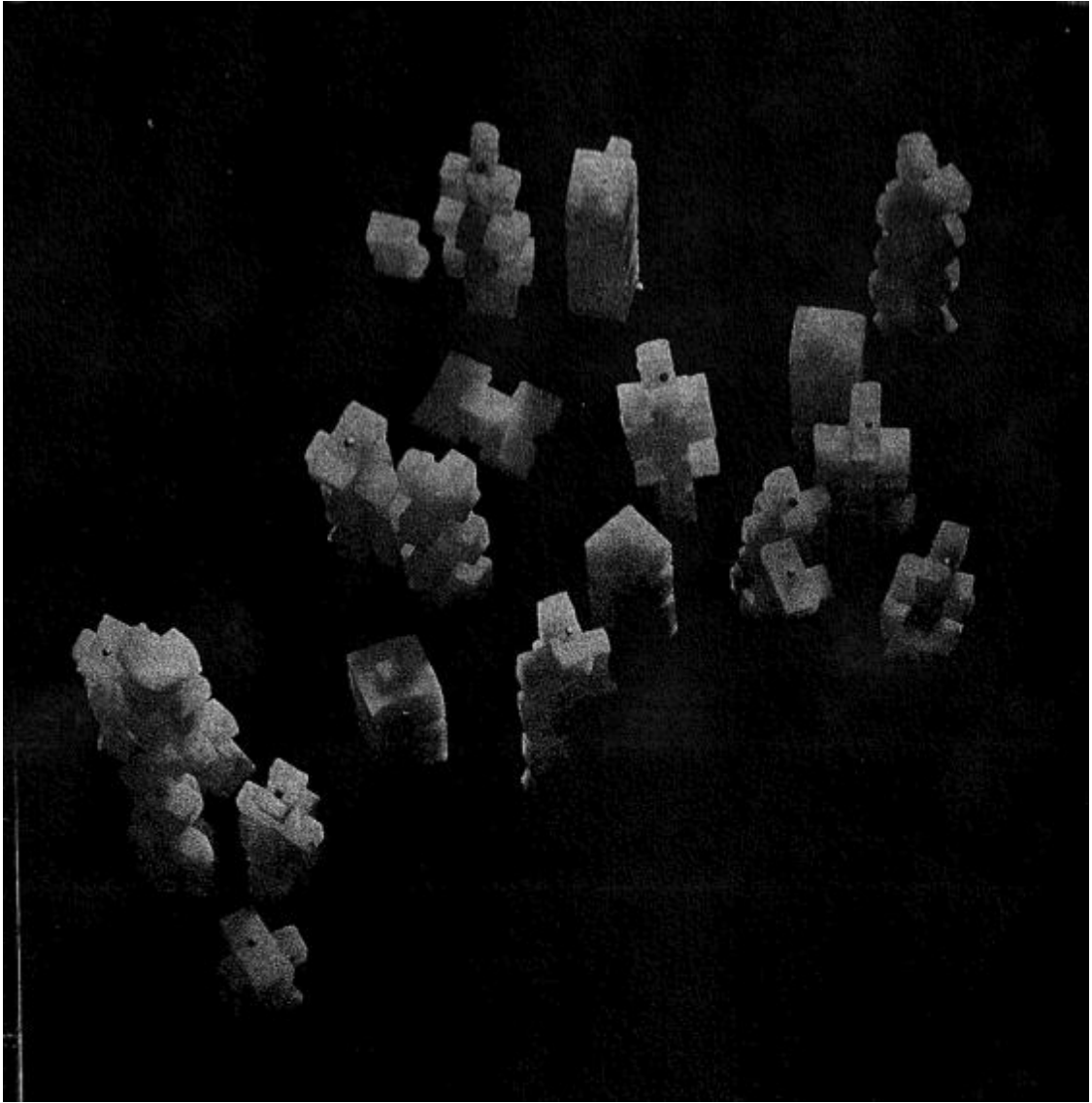
Drawing of “Tower City” (1958) by Kikutake Kiyonori from *Metabolism: Proposal for a New Urbanism* (1960)

Figure 2.36



Drawing of “Marine City” (1959) by Kikutake Kiyonori from *Metabolism: Proposal for a New Urbanism* (1960)

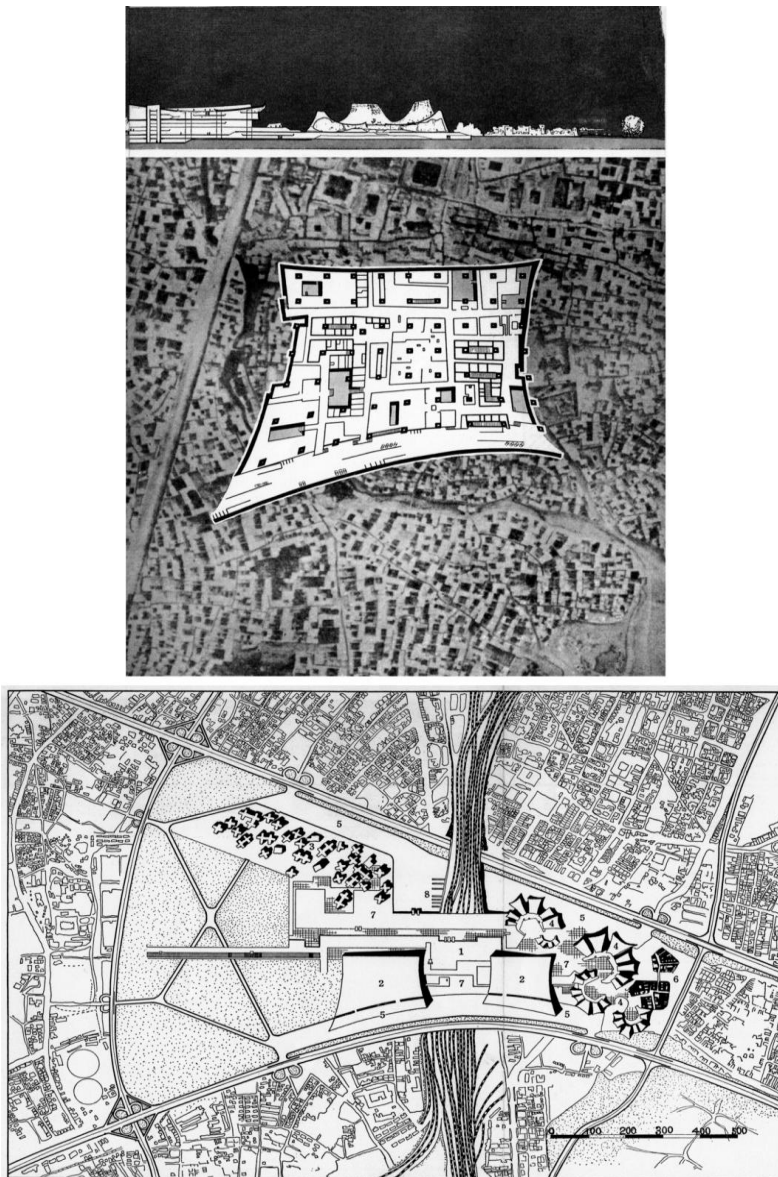
Figure 2.37



Group Form by Maki Fumihiko and Ōtaka Masato from *Metabolism: Proposal for a New Urbanism* (1960)

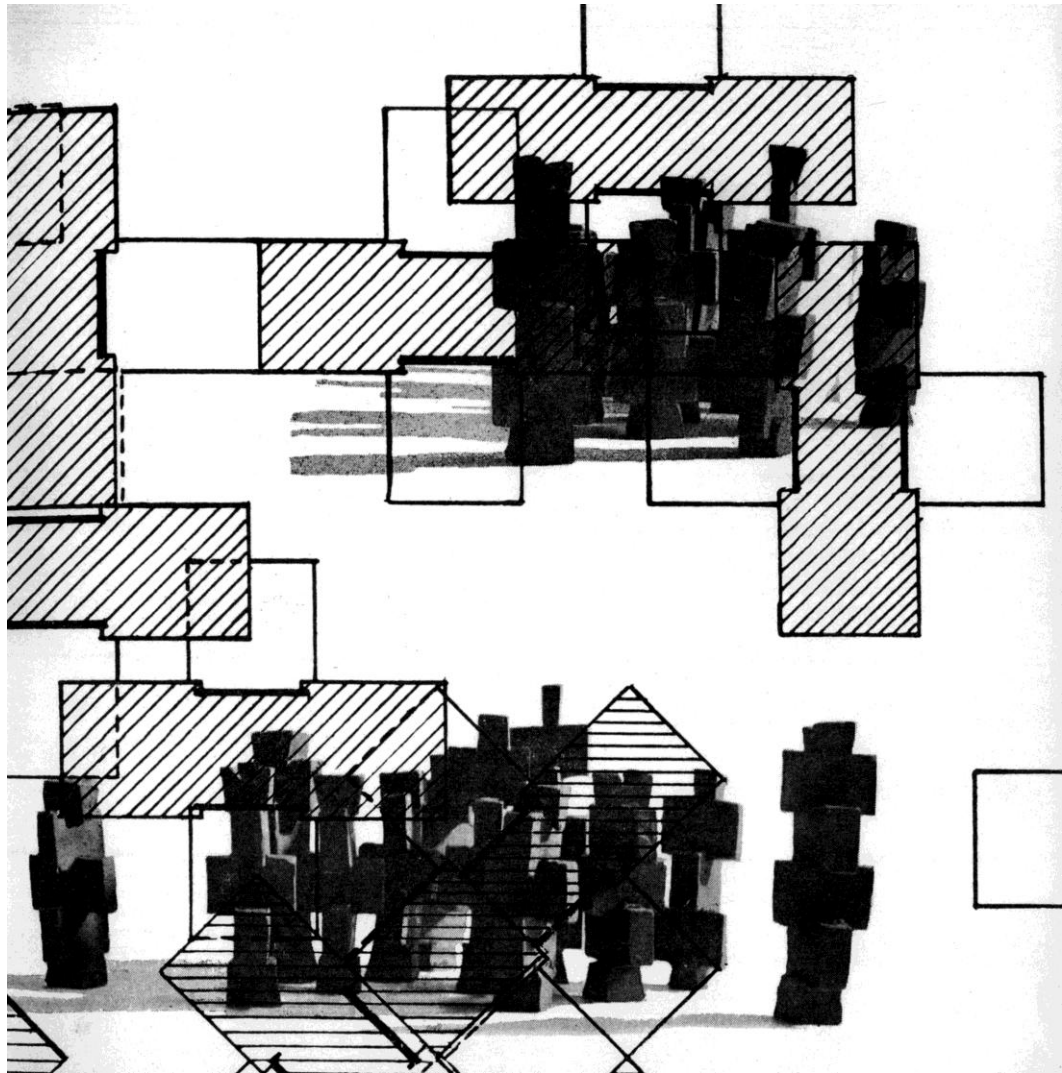


Figure 2.38



Group Form by Maki Fumihiko and Ōtaka Masato from *Metabolism: Proposal for a New Urbanism* (1960)

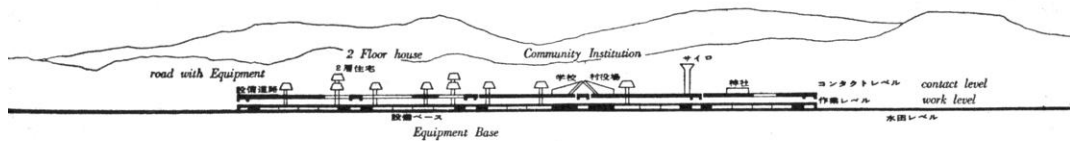
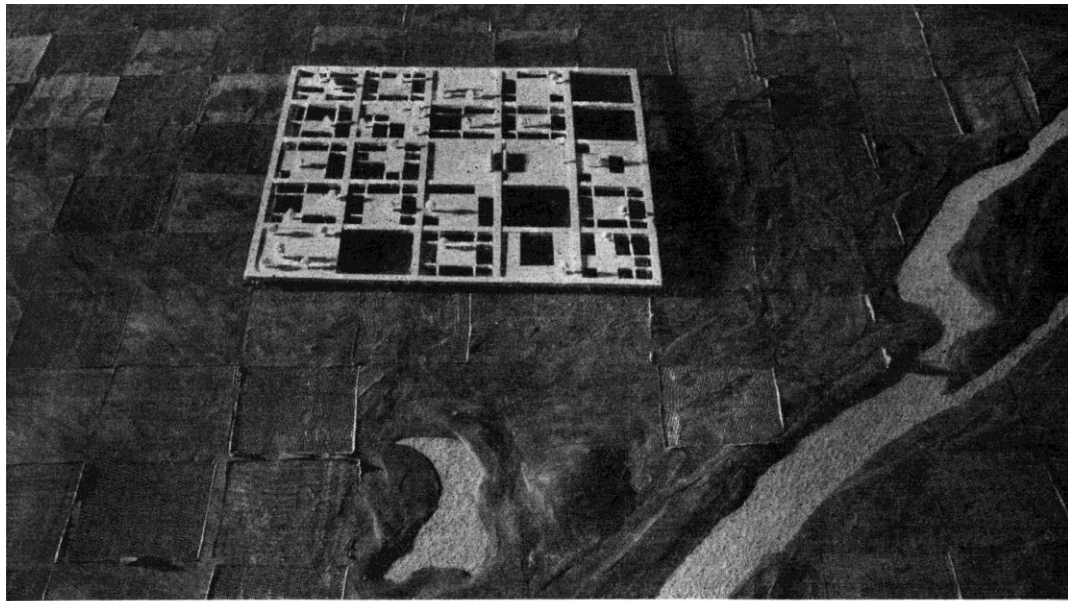
Figure 2.39



“Business Town” by Maki and Ōtaka Masato from *Metabolism: Proposal for a New Urbanism* (1960)



Figure 2.40



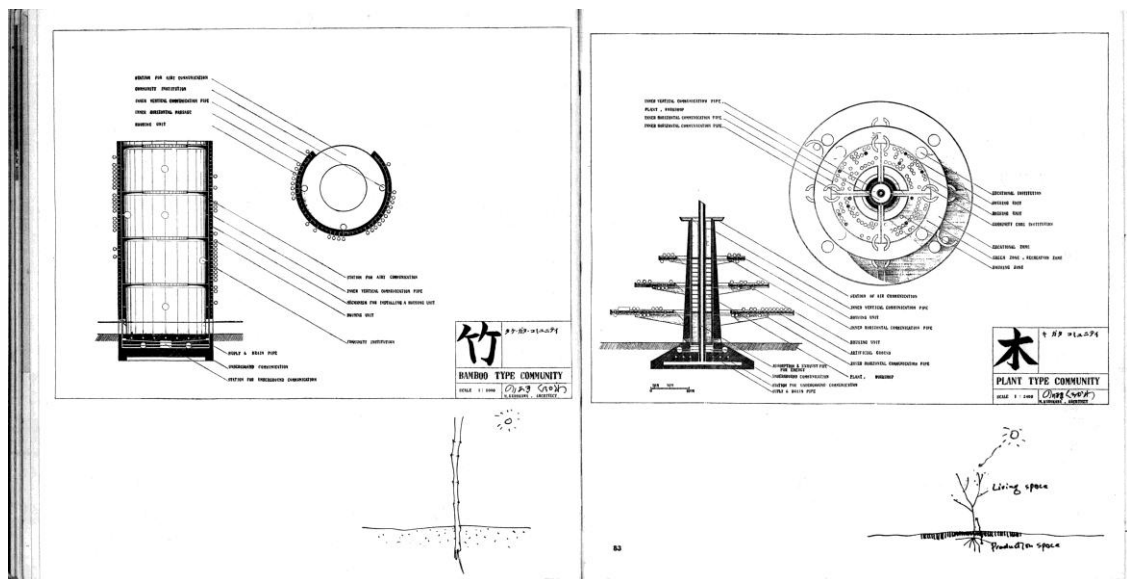
Photomontage of “Agricultural City” (1959) by Kurokawa Kishō from *Metabolism: Proposal for a New Urbanism* (1960)

Figure 2.41



Drawing of “Urban Design for New Tokyo: A Step Toward a Wall City” (1959) by Kikutake Kiyonori from *Metabolism: Proposal for a New Urbanism* (1960)

Figure 2.42



“Bamboo Type Community”(left) and “Plant Type Community”(right) designs by Kurokawa Kishō in *Metabolism: The Proposal for New Urbanism* (1960)

Figure 2.43

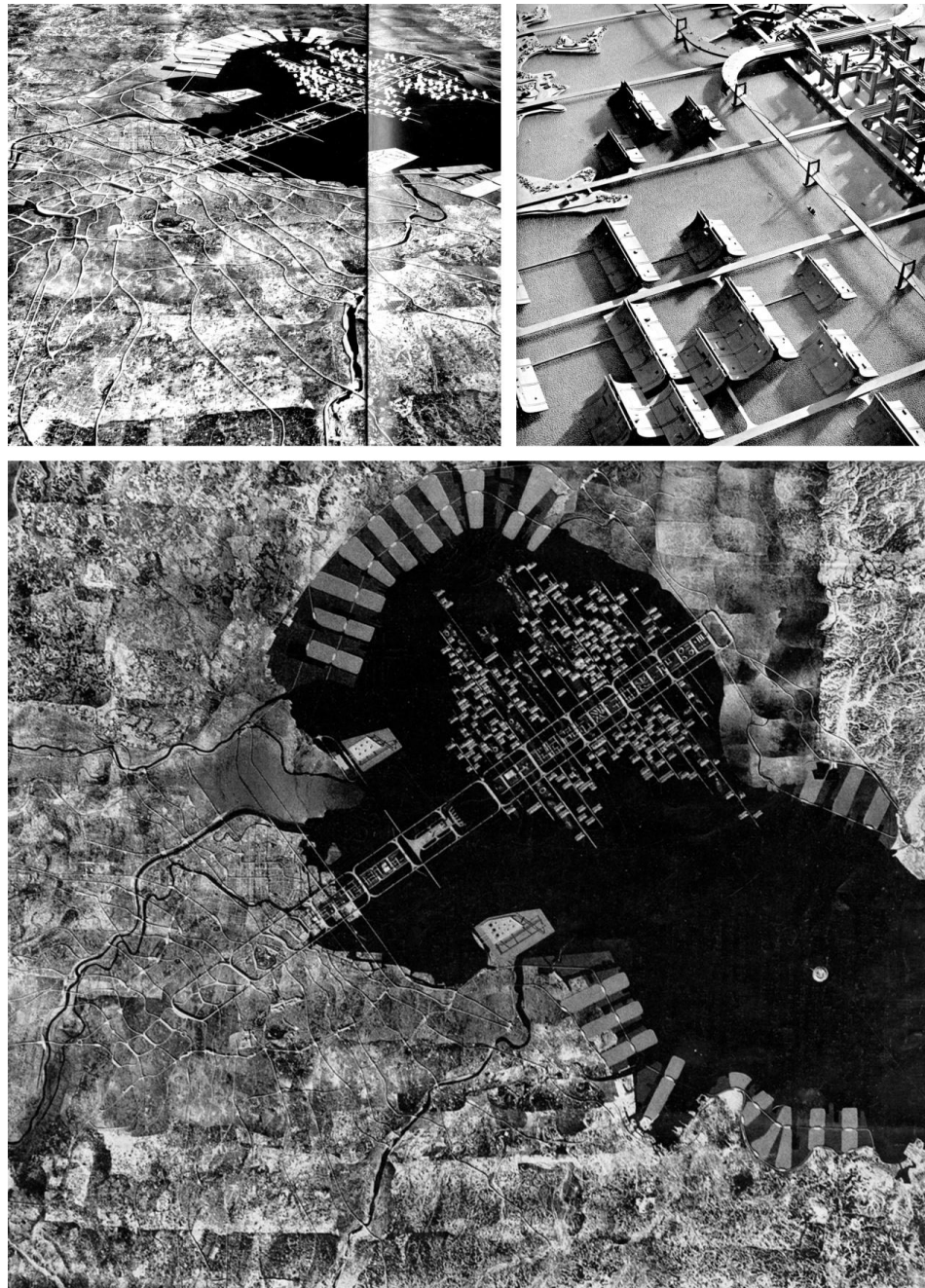
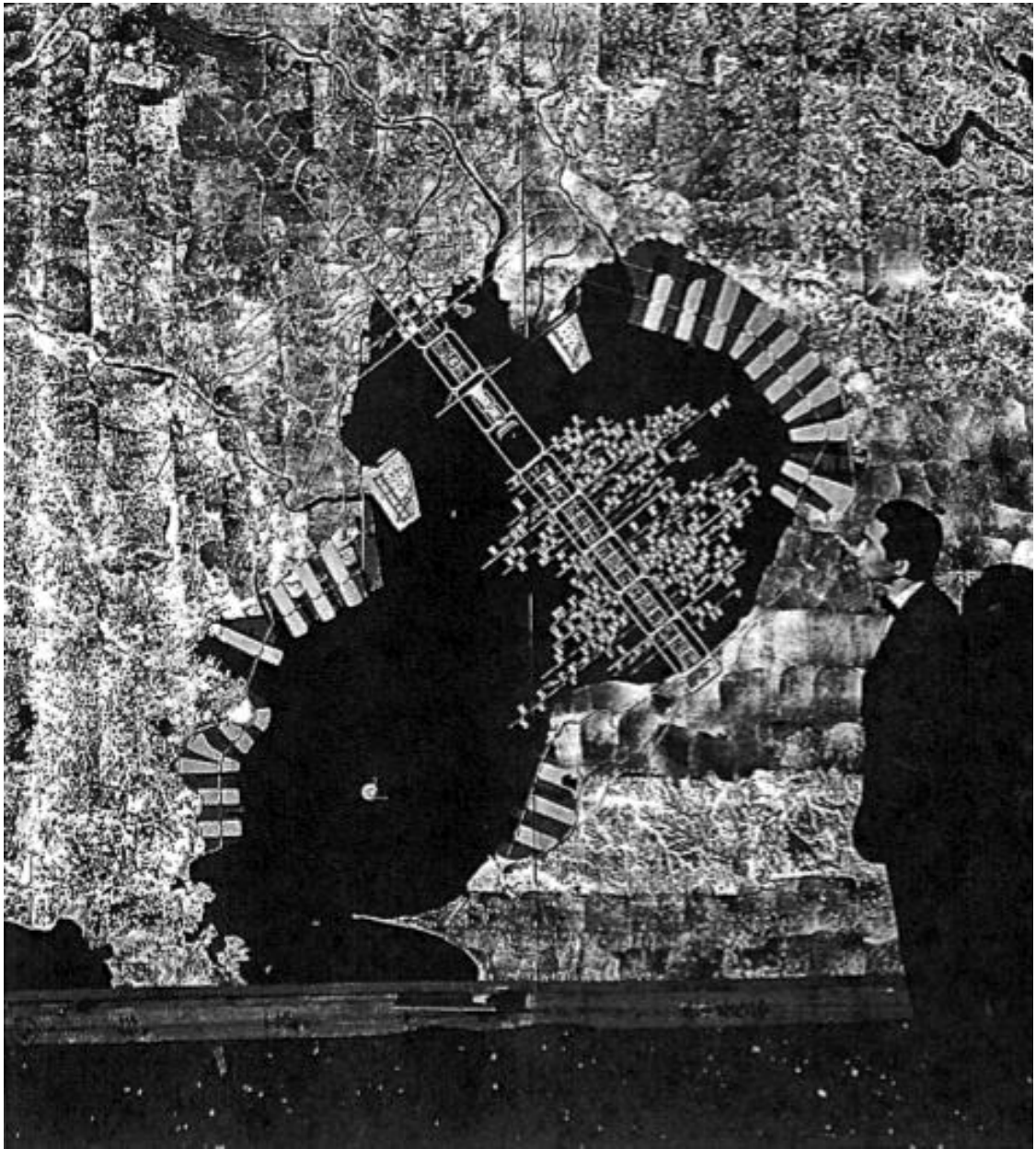
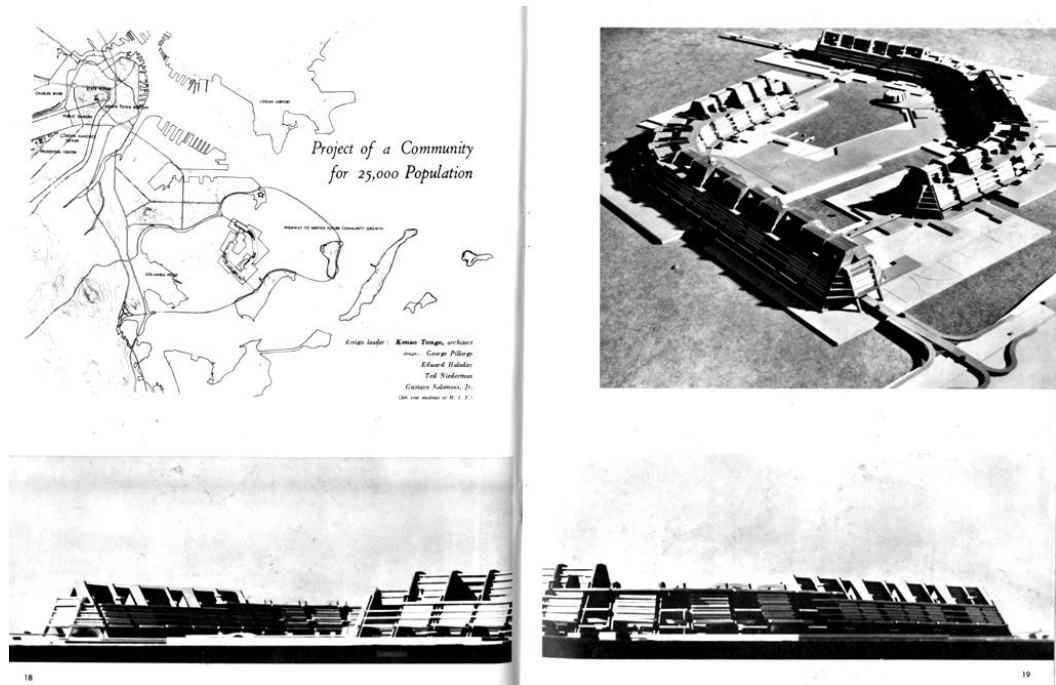


Figure 2.44



Tange stands in front of an image from *A Plan for Tokyo, 1960 – Towards a Structural Reorganization* (1961)

Figure 2.45



“Project of a Community for 25,000 Population for Boston” by Tange Kenzo and his students at M.I.T. (1960)

## CHAPTER 3

### ISOZAKI ARATA AND ELECTRIC LABYRINTH (1968)

Ruins were symbolizing the past and some proposed structures of the future. The past and the future had to be together in the present. This is not an image of the future, nor an image of the past; this was an image of the present.<sup>274</sup>

--Arata Isozaki

The emergence of architect Arata Isozaki (b. 1931) in the 1960s evidenced a critical aspect of the development of Japan's postwar architecture and a shift in the subjectivity and positioning of architectural professionals. With the backdrop of the demise of Modern architecture, he opened up the possibility of breaking its boundary, and first positioned himself as a *toshi dezainā* (designer of a city) possessing the characteristics of *ryōgiteki*, literally meaning "of double-meaning," which he broadly and strategically interpreted as "ambiguous."<sup>275</sup> As a part of the generation called

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<sup>274</sup> Arata Isozaki, unpublished text from the lecture, "Utopia Project in the Age of Cultural Revolution" (23 June 2002), for the exhibition *Iconoclash*, ZKM Center for Art and Media, Karlsruhe, Germany, as appeared in *Arata Isozaki* by Ken Oshima (London: Phaidon, 2009), 12.

<sup>275</sup> Isozaki belongs to the generation of *yakeato-ha* (the group of those who experienced burnt fields), a generation of those born in the 1930s. It is believed that the term originated from an expression used by novelist Nosaka Akiyuki (b. 1930). Too young to be drafted during the height of WWII, these adolescents did not participate in the War as soldiers, and many of them experienced the end of the war in a completely devastated city. For them, the city had presented itself as a ruin when they reached an age when humans become aware of the greater world. The generation also includes graphic designer Sugiura Kōhei, with whom Isozaki later collaborated on *Electric Labyrinth*. Members of the group often refer to *yakeato* (burned-out ruins) in their memories as a primary landscape (*gen fūkei*) that remained fiercely etched in their minds, but also served as their creative source. In his writings, Isozaki often uses the word *haikyo* (ruins) because it expresses the feeling of loss in both feeling and physicality that he experienced when he stood amid the ruins. He described it as emptiness, vacuum, null, loss and a feeling of disappearance or the stopping of time. Arata Isozaki, "Ruins," in *Arata Isozaki*, trans. Ken Oshima, 28-9. In the late fifties, Isozaki was part of an architect collective called Gokikai (meaning, the fifth term

*yakeato ha* (the group of those who experienced burnt fields) born between 1930 and 1934 in Japan, he remembers having stood in the completely burnt city of Ōita, having narrowly escaped being drafted to fight in the war. With his attitude shaped by these experiences, Isozaki wore multiple hats, beginning in the late 1950s, as a designer of an imaginary city, critic, artist, activist, and soon a prominent architect, to contribute to the building of the skyline in postwar Japan. Taken under the wing of Tange Kenzō, Isozaki later worked with him on an important aspect of the state-funded Japan World Expo 1970, designing its central facility, the Festival Plaza or Omatsuri Hiroba (which will be discussed in Chapter 4 hereof). As architectural historian Ken Oshima has argued, having borrowed from “external cultural models, linguistics, art history, philosophy, mathematics and science,” Isozaki “sought to break out from the claustrophobic rhetoric of a so-called natural or classical language of architecture.”<sup>276</sup> Acting on the upcoming turn of postmodernism by adopting an interdisciplinary and iconoclastic strategy, Isozaki wrote and published numerous essays on urbanism in both art and architecture journals. In 1959-1960, while closely affiliated with a short-lived but radically avant-garde artist collective, Neo Dadaism Organizers (also simply known as Neo-Dada),<sup>277</sup> he designed the White House, which was the atelier

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group). One of its activities was to jointly create the winning design for the Sōhyō Kaikan hall. This was one of the early groups of architects created in postwar Japan, perhaps following the Marxist group of architects NAU (Shin-nihon Kenchiku Shūdan, meaning the New Japan Architect Collective) established in 1947. In the late fifties, Isozaki collaborated with architects Itō Teiji and Kawakami Hidemitsu; under the collective pen name Hachida Toshiya (八田利也 also pronounced “*hattari ya*,” meaning a liar), they wrote a piece of harsh criticism of postwar architecture and the architectural profession in Japan, in particular of Tange Kenzō. These activities led to/ contributed to Isozaki’s early formation of multiple subjectivities as the frontrunner of the emerging architectural professionals. Isozaki Arata, “Isozaki Arata Interview with Hino Naohiko, Turning Point, *From Space to Environment*,” *Ten Plus One*, 44 (November 2007), 169-70.

<sup>276</sup> Ken Oshima, “Paradoxical Processes,” *Arata Isozaki*, 12.

<sup>277</sup> Although Isozaki was not directly involved in the activities of Neo Dada, he was a close observer of the collective. Isozaki had been familiar with some of the collective



for the collective leader Yoshimura Masunobu and the collective's meeting place. During the day, Isozaki worked from Tange Kenzō's laboratory at the University of Tokyo on projects like "1960 A Tokyo Plan." Simultaneously, he was actively engaged in anti-Anpo (abbreviation for Nichibei Anzen Hoshō Jōyaku, or the

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artists from his hometown Ōita, where, as a high school student, he frequented an art supply shop, Kimuraya, in the 1950s. The store's owner, Kimura Noritoshi, organized some of his regular customers into a collective called Shinseiki-gun (new century group), which included Yoshimura Masanobu, Akasegawa Genpei, Genpei's elder brother Akasegawa Katsuhiko, Kazakura Shō (a.k.a., Hashimoto Shōichi), and Isozaki Arata. Yoshimura and Isozaki were a year apart at Ōita First Prefectural High School. Isozaki's friendship with some of the artists continued as they moved to Tokyo to pursue college educations. Later, Isozaki's close tie with the group enabled him to even organize at his home a happening event, titled "something happens" in one evening in 1962 for his fellow artist Yoshimura Masunobu's departure for New York. At the end of the evening, Butoh dancer Hijikata Tatsumi and painter Shinohara Ushio stripped naked and danced on the roof, spotlighted from below. A police car was dispatched and the following morning Isozaki was escorted to a nearby police station for the indecent exposure of the two artists. There, among many guests was Tange Kenzō and Okamoto Tarō. Isozaki Arata, *Kūkan e: Kongen e to sokō suru shikō* (Towards the space: thoughts reverting back to the origin)(1972): reprint (Tokyo: Kashima Shuppankai, 1997), 484-85. Earlier in 1959, a group of artists, including Akasegawa Genpei and Shinohara Ushio, formed Neo Dada at a meeting that took place at Muramatsu Garō gallery in the Ginza part of Tokyo, and in May 1960 the collective issued a manifesto at the White House (Yoshimura's atelier designed by Isozaki) in the evening of the opening day of *Yomiuri Andepandan ten* (Yomiuri Independent Exhibition). The art critic Takiguchi Shūzō was among the attendees. The collective members included Yoshimura, Akasegawa, Arakawa, Kazakura, Ueno Kizō, Shinohara, Toshima Soroku, Ishibashi Kiyoji, Iwasaki Kunihiro, and Ueda Jun. Later, Kanaka Shintarō, Tanabe Santarō, Yoshino Shinkai, Iwamoto Kiyoko, and Kinoshita Arata joined it. They had three exhibitions in 1960, one each in April, July and September. The first two exhibitions took place at a commercial gallery and the third and last at Hibiya Park in downtown Tokyo. Many of the works exhibited were of an avant-garde nature, and ephemeral. For example, in the April exhibition, Arakawa Shūsaku showed a sculpture of a bowl of sand, where numerous plastic bags therein were filled with water, and Ueda Jun showed a piece of tofu on which sprouts had grown. In the September show, Shakusawa Kinpei showed a piece of cotton, which he pulled out of a futon found in the nearby Imperial Hotel and on which he had urinated. Later in the same year, because of the collective's central figure Yoshimura's unexpected marriage, the collective dissolved. Chiba Shigeo, *Gendai bijutsu itsudatsu shi* (A (deviant history of contemporary art))(Tokyo: Shōbunsha, 1986), 73-5.

U.S.-Japan Security Treaty) activities, picketing in front of the National Diet building and often observing the city streets on fire.

Carrying on his work, characterized as multifaceted in nature, he created exhibition and film set designs such as artist Okamoto Tarō's 1964 exhibition at the Seibu Department Store (where he kept the lighting for the exhibition extremely dim) and a set for the film *Tanin no kao* (The face of another) and participated in important exhibitions such as *Kūkan kara kankyō e* (From space to environment) in 1966. (For this exhibition, he designed the exhibition as well as placing one of his artworks.) Then, in 1968 Isozaki created, in collaboration with four artists, the multimedia, multisensory, and experimental installation *Electric Labyrinth* (Figure 3.1) for the occasion of the 14th *Milan Design Triennial*. It was a responsive and cybernetic environment of revolving walls and image projections, where a viewer found himself, as he walked through the installation, embodied in a flux of complex and kaleidoscopic layers of space temporarily created, and filled with images mostly iconoclastic—including photographs, prints and drawings—that dealt with life, death and spaces in-between. The images challenge the values and systems created and represented by the authorities. At the end of the installation, the viewer would see numerous images of futuristic mega cities projected in loop on Isozaki's large photo collage of Hiroshima destroyed by the world's first nuclear attack, titled *Hiroshima Returned to Ruins Again* (Figure 3.5). Isozaki and his collaborators found many of these images for the revolving walls from an expanding pool of images in the public domain, museums, books, and exhibitions, all of them part of the active visual economy of Japan. Ultimately, Isozaki's extraordinary ability to find, read, interpret and utilize photography as a synthetic and flexible material to construct and express his own complex concept of time and space (*jikū*) requires special attention and analysis.

In this chapter, I contend that the installation *Electric Labyrinth* not only embodied the complexities, uncertainties and ambiguities of Isozaki's positions in the 1960s but also manifested his realization of the radical shift in Modernist architecture as well as Japanese society and the nation's modern history in 1968, the year of resistance movements on a global basis. The installation also revealed his methodology for imagining and designing a city, greatly different from that of Metabolism. While the Metabolists based their methods on biology and science and argued that the life of a city is linear, Isozaki argued that the ruination of the city begins when it completes its renewal, and thus its life is circular. To him, the life and death of the city was compressed in one moment. With images and sound (e.g., experimental electric sound by Fluxus composer Ichiyanagi Toshi) structured, to allow an element of chance to intervene, Isozaki widened the possible range of methodologies applicable to the life and design of the city. The result was a complex web of images and sounds one could find in *Electric Labyrinth*. I further assert, both that Isozaki's intricate and complex use and mix of visual materials, such as photographs and drawings in the structure enabled him to express his complex ideas not only about time and space in cities, but an archetype of the city suited to postwar Japan, different from that of a historical city in the West. Overall, the installation *Electric Labyrinth* embodies his ideas as expressed in the statement, "(The) future city is in a ruin." I posit that his attitude of anti-authority and iconoclasm was injected in the low budget and hand-made installation, and that in his mind the installation project remedied and balanced his participation in the nationally operated mega-scale and utopian World Expo 1970, the subject of Chapter 4. In designing the cybernetic and "technotopian" Festival Plaza for the expo, Isozaki apparently took advantage of the nation's highest capital and technology made available to him, which he claimed later placed him in an extremely uncomfortable quandary between resistance and authority.

### **The Installation, *Electric Labyrinth***

In January 1968, Isozaki was invited to participate in the upcoming 14<sup>th</sup> Milan Design Triennial by Giancarlo De Carlo (1919-2005), the triennial's commissioner and a leftist architect who was part of the then-newly formed Team Ten, a dissenting force at the CIAM (International Congress of Modern Architecture). Members of Team Ten included Hans Hollein, Peter Cook, Saul Bass, Georges Candilis, Aldo Van Eyck, Gyorgy Kepes, George Nelson, and Peter and Alison Smithson. (Among them, the Smithsons had attended the 1960 World Design Conference in Tokyo.) De Carlo's proposal for the triennial was to invite "a series of outstanding personalities...to compose a series of events representing both an opposition to massification and a triumph of intelligence applied to a society abounding in multiple participations."<sup>278</sup> Later, Stefano Boeri pointed out that the triennial sought out "an alternative to the massification of society in the concept of participation in culture with a capacity to safeguard individuality."<sup>279</sup> The triennial, with its theme of "Greater Number," aimed to generate a larger audience to enable its participants to communicate with the masses through a wide range of visual materials. It also executed a variety of installation projects, many of which illuminated the then-recent student protests that began in Paris in May 1968. The triennial exhibitions included the reproduction of street barricades, photographs of student protests (including those of the Japan Students Organization, the so-called *Zengakuren*, and those of young Florentine architects called UFO), and photographs of Japanese students at Haneda Airport who protested against Prime

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<sup>278</sup> Hans Ulrich Obrist, "Triennale di Milano 68: A Case Study and Beyond, Arata Isozaki's *Electric Labyrinths*. A <<Ma>> of Images," in *Iconoclash: Beyond the Image Wars in Science, Religion and Art*, ed. Bruno Latour, and Peter Weibel, for the exhibition at ZKM Center for Art and Media, Karlsruhe, Germany (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2002), 364.

<sup>279</sup> Obrist, 360.

Minister Satō's visit to Vietnam in 1967, an incident known as "Haneda tōsō." Also included were an exhibition of posters for anti-Imperialistic activities from all of the world (including Vietnam, China and Cuba), Isozaki's installation that attempted to reconstruct the amnesia of destroyed cities Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and an installation by Dutch architect Aldo van Eyck, who protested against the spread of chemical substances that destroyed the jungles of Vietnam.<sup>280</sup> Overall, the exhibitions reflected the politics of the time, many of which made reference to the notion of multiplicity and to the theme, "Greater Number," through various "extraneous elements such as natural phenomena, minor objects, non-serial production, imaginative freedom and fantasy."<sup>281</sup> In the eyes of many critics, however, most of these exhibitions appeared merely to be visual forgeries of the activities seen in the streets of Paris in May 1968.<sup>282</sup>

Isozaki, who had just returned from Skopje, in the former Yugoslavia, for Tange's competition-winning city reconstruction design, accepted De Carlo's invitation, and within the next couple of months, he pulled together his exhibition concept and lined up collaborators for the project. They were the photographer Tōmatsu Shōmei, the composer Ichiyanagi Toshi, the graphic designer Sugiura Kōhei, and the sound engineer Okumura Yukio. As exhibition designer, and participating artist, Isozaki had worked with all but Sugiura in the landmark 1966 exhibition, *Kūkan kara kankyō e* (From space to environment). The exhibition, to be discussed later, was of paramount importance because it was the first major exhibition of an interdisciplinary nature in postwar Japan. Interpreting the notion known as *kankyō* (meaning, environment) further, in *Electric Labyrinth* Isozaki explored his desire to

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<sup>280</sup> Isozaki Arata, "Senkyo sareta toriennāre" (the hijacked triennale), in *Kūkan e*, 432.

<sup>281</sup> Mirko Zardini, "Milan 1968 Triennale Milano: 'il grande numero,'" in *Team 10 1953-81 in Search of a Utopia of the Present* (Rotterdam: NAI Publishers), 158.

<sup>282</sup> Ibid.

create an environment that consisted of space-time (*jikū*), which one can perceive only by intervening with his or her body.<sup>283</sup> To the architect, it meant an environment that would enable sensory and full embodiment, sensed differently from space-time as conceived under Western modernity. Defining such an environment through the notion of “*ma*,” which simply means a “gap” or a “marginal void,” Isozaki wanted to “grasp *ma* at the moment at which time-and-space had not yet been disentangled and rendered as distinct functions.”<sup>284</sup> To Isozaki, a series of *ma*, a series of temporal and spatial gaps created by the visual materials intermediated by viewers, constituted *Electric Labyrinth*, and, ultimately, it signifies no less than an archetype of the city.

Isozaki chose to work collectively in creating the installation, although ultimately it became so clearly his own work that it could no longer be labeled a collaborative project. He applied this way of working particularly from his participation as a set designer in the avant-garde film, “*Tanin no kao*”(The Face of Another)(1966) directed by filmmaker and *ikebana* (flower arrangement) master Teshigahara Hiroshi. In the film, which was adapted from an Abe Kōbō novel with the same title, Isozaki gained the experience of working as an artistic director, collaborating with artists like Miki Tomio, known for his sculptures of a large human ear. There, Isozaki designed a surreal doctor’s office, all made of Plexiglas, almost completely transparent and abstract, as if it were floating, where one of the main characters of the film, who had lost his face in a chemical explosion, received a new

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<sup>283</sup> The participating artists include Ichiyanagi Toshi, Awatsu Kiyoshi (part of Metabolism), Takamatsu Jirō (part of the conceptual art collective, High Red Center), Tanaka Ikkō (graphic designer), Nakahara Ikkō (photographer), Hara Kōji (architect), Yamaguchi Katsuhiro (inter-media artist), Ōtsuji Kiyoji (photographer and member of the artist/scientist collective established in the early 1950s, Jikken Kōbō), and photographer Tōmatsu Shōmei. See details of the exhibition in Midori Yoshimoto, “From Space to Environment: The Origin of *Kankyō* and the Emergence of Intermedia Art in Japan,” *Art Journal*, 67-3 (Fall 2008), 25-46.

<sup>284</sup> Isozaki, *Japan-ness in Architecture*, 95.

face and a new identity.<sup>285</sup> Isozaki later recalled the relevance of working for the film among a group of artists, and how that prepared him for his later installation. In the film set, Isozaki wanted to create “a space for acting with a completely abstract and almost zero gravity background, with as few contours of architecture and real objects as possible.”<sup>286</sup> He later related the film-set space to his earlier experience in New York City at sundown, which he had visited for the first time in the early 1960s. In the metropolis, he experienced a moment when the megacity space lost its shadow and created a sense of floating and hovering, filled with fluorescent lights and curtain walls of skyscrapers.<sup>287</sup> To him, the city was like a floating sculpture, without a sense of gravity, cast in a dimming light.

The installation is based on an intricate and complex set of Isozaki’s ideas and design concepts through which he responds to the uncertainty and instability of the time. It seems that images take utmost importance in his conceptualization of them. Isozaki’s undated concept memo (Figure 3.2) that I discovered during my archival research in the architect’s office in late 2007 has unveiled that Isozaki created the installation’s key concepts first and then gathered images that respond to each of the concepts. They were represented in Chinese and Japanese characters, such as 増殖 (*zōshoku*, meaning multiplication), 死滅 (*shimetsu*, meaning extinction and annihilation), 衝突 (*shōtotsu*, meaning collision and conflict), ひしめきあい (*hishimekiai*, meaning the making of a commotion), and 幻覚 (*genkaku*, meaning hallucination). The concept memo evinces that he directly relates each of these

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<sup>285</sup> Much of the design work was done through correspondence between Isozaki and the film director Teshigahara, as Isozaki was away from Japan in Skopje on assignment for Tange’s winning design project. Isozaki Arata, “Isozaki Arata Interview with Hino Naohiko, Turning Point, *From Space to Environment*,” *Ten Plus One*, 48 (March 2008), 199.

<sup>286</sup> Ibid., 200.

<sup>287</sup> Isozaki wrote of this experience of his in the city in an essay, titled “*Kyozō to kigō no machi nyū yōku*” (New York City, a city of signs and fictitious images) in *Kūkan e*,

concepts to selected images, such as “photography of accidents, airplanes and cars” to show an example of the concept of collision, “Japanese *e-maki mono*, such as *jigoku zōshi* and *kiga zōshi*” to visualize grudges and hard feelings. The same memo also lists photographs of atomic bombs, mummies, and Zengakuren, as well as still images from classical Japanese tales of the supernatural, such as “Ugetsu Monogatari,” “Yotsuya Kaidan,” and “Miminashi Hōichi.” He relates the fifth concept of hallucination “to abstract(ing) the current circumstances of Tokyo, as an image.”<sup>288</sup> In addition, in the memo he traces the concepts to specific images, like a photograph or a drawing, marking where each of these visual materials can be found. These notes suggest that his ideas and motivations to create an installation centered on his selection of images.

Isozaki himself designed the architectural elements for the installation as seen in the floor plan and isometric view (Figure 3.3). (Also included in Isozaki’s archive were a series of conceptual drawings of the installation’s main structure, and an electrical wiring plan to establish the installation’s infrared interface structure and the installation’s multiple slide projections.) A conceptual drawing (Figure 3.4) that I found during a research visit indicates the architect’s considerations, regarding the height of the revolving wall structure in relation to a viewer’s height, in terms of his aim of engulfing the viewer. The presence of his handwritten interjection in the memo, seemingly a reminder to himself, reads “to organize things I have figured out about (something about) *banpaku* (the World Expo),” underscores that he was working on both the installation design and the project for the expo simultaneously.

The entire installation (Figure 3.3) consisted of (a) sixteen large aluminum-covered curvilinear walls covered with images, and (b) one large rectangular photo-collage, titled “Hiroshima returned to Ruins again” (Figure 3.5)

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<sup>288</sup> Isozaki Arata, undated memo regarding the production of *Electric Labyrinth* in the collection of Isozaki Arata.



placed on the wall beyond (a). Four of the sixteen curvilinear walls, located in the center, were structured to freely move at any time whenever anyone passed, triggering a nearby infrared beam. The rest of the curvilinear walls turn constantly, systematically but slowly with a motor, creating a kind of vortex-like effect. The visual elements for the installation were prepared in Japan, such as enlarged photographs, prints (Figure 3.6) and montages; later they were assembled and placed on the curvilinear walls created in Milan (Figure 3.7). On the walls, the visual materials (to be discussed in depth below) that symbolically represented “hell,” “death,” and “destruction” were collaged or silk-screened by graphic designer Sugiura Kōhei. Because the walls’ movement created an unexpected juxtaposition of the images, a viewer encountered a complex kaleidoscopic and kinetic image cascade. These images collapsed each other as a cascade onto a viewer, and accumulatively created a chaotic and anti-canonical dissonance, destroying the values and aesthetics attached to each of the base images. Beyond the curvilinear walls, there was a space where, on the large rectangular photo collage of the A-bombed city of Hiroshima, hundreds of images of futuristic architectural and city design projects by Isozaki and his contemporary Japanese architects, such as the architects of Metabolism (as discussed in Chapter 3) were projected by three projectors, each of which carried approximately eighty slides (Figure 3.8). The projections on the photomontage epitomized both the physicality and ephemeral nature of the city.

In the installation, Isozaki made a point to show how the future city would itself constantly fall into ruin, arguing that ruins represented neither the past nor the future but embodied the present.<sup>289</sup> It meant to him that the city begins its decaying process as soon as it completes its renewal. The city of today contains a ruin from the past and simultaneously it represents a ruin for the future. For him, the city is based on

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<sup>289</sup> Obrist, *Iconoclash*, 361.

a system of automation and self-generation that is forever incomplete. The installation embodies this system through its structural, mechanical, visual and aleatory elements, as well as the responsive, uncertain and never-completing nature of the space-time scheme proposed by Isozaki. Combining the two parts of the installation—the structure of the curvilinear walls, and images projected onto the ruined Hiroshima landscape—Isozaki wanted to visualize the archetype of a city, based not on the rules of Modernist architecture, but on the rules specific in postwar Japan. In the installation, he also wished to present dichotomies of the elements concerning a city, such as “planning” and “disappearance,” and “construction” and “destruction.”

As soon as the design triennial opened to the press on May 30, 1968, Isozaki’s project was subjected to an unexpected takeover and lockout by a group of students, young architects and architecture professors (Figure 3.9), led by leftist artists like Italian sculptor Arnaldo Pomodoro, and a number of architects who eventually founded groups in Italy like Superstudio and Archizoom. The lockout continued for the next ten days. Part of the reason for the protest was the triennial organizers’ exclusive selection of who could be exhibited, often excluding local architects and artists, against the backdrop of the global trend of protests that began in Paris earlier in the year. Ironically, the newly emerging group of architects, Team Ten (including Giancarlo De Carlo, the organizer of the triennial, and a forceful voice of the group), and the collaborators and participating artists and architects of the triennial (including Isozaki) were seen by the protestors as elitist and authoritative and thus subject to criticism and lockout.<sup>290</sup> Nevertheless, Isozaki, who himself had participated in the

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<sup>290</sup> De Carlo’s recent interview with Staefano Boeri unveils that the triennial takeover was caused by hostility towards the organizers, motivated by the following circumstances: many Milanese intellectuals were excluded from the 1968 triennial. De Carlo promoted “the most avant-garde points of reference in international architecture and urban planning to participate in the exhibition,” leaving only a small space for local participants, and excluding the works of “narcissistic foolishness which had all

anti-*anpo* protests in 1960 Japan, was sympathetic to the cause of the lockout, and recognized that he himself was becoming a member of the authority by having participated in the triennial by invitation.<sup>291</sup> This experience placed him in a dilemma stemming from the realization that he was becoming a part of the growing global hegemony in 1968. He had aspired to be anti-authoritarian yet become part of the intellectual design community, utilizing the most advanced technology, often made available by the authorities, to create a new prototype of the city, and he obviously found it to be extremely difficult to accomplish both. The experience in Milan made him reconsider the meaning of his daily design practice versus maintaining his anti-authoritarian stance, and revealed to him the dilemma and contradiction involved.<sup>292</sup> The experience emphasized Isozaki's duality or ambiguity in belonging to both the resistance and the authority in 1968. Ultimately, with this double positioning, Isozaki saw the occupied triennial as a "utopia's death," taking his experience critically but somewhat cynically. In this incident, Isozaki sensed that the extreme nature of radicalism could destroy itself when it goes too far. He contends that when a protesting designer declares the death of the system (the system that supports design, architecture and urbanism), such an act itself declares his own death as a designer.<sup>293</sup> Isozaki's dual or ambiguous positions, or stated differently, his nature of

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too often occupied the exhibition spaces of previous editions of the Triennial: bogus handicrafts, little jewels, ceramics from Ruta, all mixed together without the slightest theme, criterion, or rational." *Iconoclash*, 364.

<sup>291</sup> Isozaki's essay, titled "*Senkyo sareta toriennāre*" (the hijacked triennale), and a series of correspondence between the architect and the Triennial organizers, which were discovered during my research in the architect's archive, demonstrate his pro-takeover attitude.

<sup>292</sup> Isozaki, *Kūkan e*, 430. Arata Isozaki, *Kenchiku no Kaitai* (The dismantling of architecture) (1975): reprint (Tokyo: Kashima Shuppankai, 1997), iv – v.

<sup>293</sup> *Ibid.*, iii.

*ryōgiteki*, allowed him to situate himself outside such self-destruction.<sup>294</sup> The takeover was generally supported by the global design community and in Italy, but it generated the valuable insight that the field of architectural design, no matter how avant-garde it might be, had established itself by synchronizing itself with the logic and rule of industrial and capitalist societies.<sup>295</sup>

### **Collaborators**

Isozaki's collaborators, Tōmatsu Shōmei, Sugiura Kōhei, Ichiyanagi Toshi and Okumura Yukio, had different roles in the project. Rather than being equal contributors, in reality they served as content providers or contractors in a legal sense, leaving control and authorship of their parts of the installation entirely to Isozaki, whether or not they had intended to do so. Taking on the role of a movie director, Isozaki provided each of them with a scenario and an assignment. The interviews I conducted with each of Tōmatsu, Sugiura and Ichiyanagi revealed that the collectivism did not involve either equal collaboration or fair credit among the collaborators, and that they shared different levels of satisfaction from the participation. They agreed that *Electric Labyrinth* was indeed unquestionably Isozaki's own project.

For example, Tōmatsu Shōmei perceived his collaboration with Isozaki as an extremely bitter experience, finding Isozaki's treatment of the collaborators unacceptable. Tōmatsu was one of the most critical emerging photographers in Japan in the sixties, photographing political subject matters such as atomic bomb victims in

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<sup>294</sup> At the same time, having empathy toward the protestors, he began investigating the meaning of the "icons" (including icons of Modernist architecture) represented in the images and built environments, and of the powers represented in and beyond the triennial, triggered by the collision surrounding him in the triennial between the new authority, that is, Team Ten, and the anti-authority movement of the younger generation that hijacked the triennial. Ibid.

<sup>295</sup> Isozaki Arata, *Kūkan e*, 437.

Nagasaki (Figure 3.10), the US military presence in Okinawa and its effect on the lives of Okinawans, as well as extremely subjective and often poetic images of the city, in his fluidly complex and often collage-like compositions. Known for his non-sentimental and subjective photographs of the city (such as those of an asphalted pavement (Figure 3.11) and a construction site with debris in the air, the effect achieved by the technique of double exposure, as discussed in Chapter 3), he was invited to become the newest member of the collective Metabolism. His photographs of the city, often depicting various types of the surface of the city, were often seen in art and architecture journals, let alone photography journals, in the 1960s.<sup>296</sup> As an avant-garde artist, he was invited to participate in the aforementioned 1966 exhibition, *From Space to Environment*, for which he created an installation, titled “No. 24.” There, he simply created and laid out on the floor a painted white square cube of 2.4 meters with a few black-painted footsteps, with a sign that reads “please come in one by one” at the entrance. Naming this a “white event,” he simply photographed people who experienced the environment (e.g., placing their own feet on the painted area), and desired the photographs of the participants to be seen by others, positioning the experience as a microcosm of Japanese society.<sup>297</sup> Greatly respecting the photographer, Isozaki invited Tōmatsu to collaborate on *Electric Labyrinth*. But my interview with

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<sup>296</sup> One such example is the photographic series, titled “Tokyo,” that appeared in the February 1963 issue of the art journal, *Bijutsu techō*. In this series, Tōmatsu shows seven photographs of the city, all of a surreal nature, beginning with an image of a skull, and including a double exposure image of various small hardware parts against a stone paved street, as well an image of abandoned female mannequins by a built structure. These photographs can be classified as belonging to the genre of “subjective photography,” the genre coined by Otto Steinert during the 1940s. It is broadly interpreted as photography undertaken for purposes of self-expression rather than to record the appearance of the external world.

<sup>297</sup> Tōmatsu Shōmei, “No. 24,” *Mainichi kamera*, (Nov. 1966), (page number unknown). This article includes the artist’s short essay on the project, followed by six photographs of the installation, which includes viewers who stepped on the footmarks.

Tōmatsu revealed that the two men sharply disagreed over the selection of photographs for the installation, and that the disagreement escalated into a painful conflict that has lasted up to the present day.<sup>298</sup> Tōmatsu thought they had agreed to use his photographs of atomic bomb victims from Nagasaki, including those of the Fukuda sisters (from his series, entitled “Nagasaki 11:02”)(Two images on the left column, Figure 3.10.) but Isozaki decided not to, and apparently upset the photographer sufficiently that Tōmatsu has not spoken to the architect since then.

Tōmatsu, who was born in 1930 (a year before Isozaki) and belongs to the same *yakeato ha*, has had a specially charged feeling regarding the conditions of postwar Japan. His initial photographic subjects included a U.S. military base and the people affected by such a presence in Okinawa, and the ruins of the city caused by air raids or natural disasters (e.g., a typhoon and a flood),<sup>299</sup> and thus he related well to Isozaki’s desire to reconstruct “ruins” in the installation. However, despite such a shared passion, Isozaki disregarded his initial plan to incorporate in *Electric Labyrinth* Tōmatsu’s own photographs. Instead, he chose documentary photographs found or created by others. These photographs were researched and collected by Tōmatsu, for the occasion of the 1968 photographic exhibition *Shashin 100 nen – Nihonjin ni yoru shashin hyōgen no rekishi ten* (*Photography 100 years – an exhibition of photographic expressions by the Japanese*). As a leading figure of the curatorial team of thirteen (which included noted photographers and writers such as Naitō Masatoshi, Kawakami Shigeharu, Imai Sumie, Nakahira Takuma, and Taki Kōji), Tōmatsu and the team had spent three years researching throughout Japan.<sup>300</sup> These documentary photographs,

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<sup>298</sup> Tōmatsu Shōmei, interview by author, Naha, 20 January 2008.

<sup>299</sup> Tōmatsu Shōmei “Gen Kōkei” in *The Complete History of Japanese Photography Vol. 4 War Photography*, (Tokyo: Shōgakkan, 1987), 141-44.

<sup>300</sup> The head of the exhibition’s executive committee was realism photographer Hamaya Hiroshi. The exhibition was accompanied by an important catalogue, issued

some of which will be discussed later in depth in this chapter, included the photographs of the dead and debris piled up in the city of Nagasaki and shot one day after the atomic bombing by then army photographer Yamahata Yōsuke (Figure 3.12). The graphic designer, Sugiura Kōhei,<sup>301</sup> who was originally trained as an architect at Tokyo College of Art and Music, cut and pasted the photographs and graphic images supplied, and collaged them with visual patterns like stylized clouds from classical Japanese paintings, and he either silk-screened them or simply hand-collaged and pasted them on the panels.

Ichianagi Toshi was a young composer and pianist trained by John Cage at the Juilliard School of Music in New York City in the 1950s. Part of the Fluxus movement in NYC, having collaborated with artists such as Cage, David Tudor, and Yoko Ono to whom he had once been married, he returned to Japan in 1961 and became one of the pioneers of experimental music in Japan. Calling 1961 an epoch-making year for experimental music in Japan, Ichianagi not only introduced in his native country the music of avant-garde American composers such as Cage, Morton Feldman, Earl Brown, Christian Wolfe, and Stefan Wolpe, but also took the initiative in collectively pursuing experimental and electronic music. For example, in early 1963, he organized together with Akiyama Kuniharu and Takahashi Yūji the experimental music performer collective, New Direction, pursuing a musical genre called “chance and uncertain music.”<sup>302</sup> In 1968, focusing on the uncertain and performative nature of

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in 1971, wherein Tōmatsu wrote two chapters, one titled “Eigyō shashin” (Photography for business), and the other “Sensō no kiroku I” (A record of war I).

<sup>301</sup> Sugiura Kōhei is known for his graphic designs, and is among the most talented designers in postwar Japan. His well-known works include the design for Kawata Kikuji’s photobook, *Chizu*.

<sup>302</sup> Other notable experimental sound collectives established in the early 1960s include the Fluxus-influenced Group Ongaku, which included Kosugi Takehiko, Tone Yasunao and Shiomi Chieko. The group organized its first concert on September 15, 1961, when John Cage’s music and philosophy were surging in popularity in Japan. Takahashi Yūji, for example, performed in public the entirety of Winter Music by

Electric Labyrinth, Ichiyanagi first produced “disconnecting” noise-like electric sounds and, from there, he created taped sound effects that corresponded to, and were triggered by, the movements of the curvilinear walls.<sup>303</sup>

Lastly, Okumura Yukio, who designed the installation’s moving mechanism and infrared interface sensor, was an engineer in charge of the sound effects and recording at the avant-garde Sōgetsu Art Center that was the mecca of avant-garde art in Japan at that time. The Art Center was the auditorium of the Sōgetsu Kaikan hall, the headquarters of the Sōgetsu-ryū flower arrangement school, designed by Tange Kenzō. (The school established by Teshigahara Sōfū had from its beginning an avant-garde nature in interpreting *ikebana*, and the school opened its auditorium under the artistic direction of Sōfū’s eldest son, who later took over the school, the filmmaker Teshigahara Hiroshi.) Separately, during the 1960s, Okumura also worked as a sound and recording engineer for a couple of dozen films, mainly for the Daiei Movie company, one of the largest Japanese movie studios at that time, including *Daikaijū kūchūsen: Gamera tai Gyaosu* (*Gamera vs. Gyaos*) (1967). Based on Okumura’s wiring diagram, Isozaki created the moving and responsive wall structure in Milan.

### Visual Materials for the Installation

All of the photographs, prints and drawings used for the installation deal with life, death, and space-time between. I have observed that most of them were originally

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Cage in 1962. In 1997, the Mito Art Tower produced the exhibition, *Nihon no natsu 1960-1964* (Japanese summers 1960-64), and as part of the program for the exhibition, Ichiyanagi Toshi produced on September 21, 1997 a concert, titled *Nihon no jikken ongaku 1960s ensōkai* (Concert of experimental Japanese music from the 1960s), where Ichiyanagi, Takahashi, Feldman, Kosugi and Cage performed. Ichiyanagi was also a participating artist in the 1966 exhibition *From Space to Environment*.

<sup>303</sup> Ichiyanagi Toshi, interview by author, Tokyo, 15 December 2007.



produced at a time of conflict or crisis and represent a hegemonic shift in the history of Japan, such as the end of the Edo period or the Second World War.<sup>304</sup> Many of the images are iconoclastic because they not only did not represent an authority or conventional beauty but also destroyed the aesthetics or representation related to preexisting authorities. Isozaki had either seen and knew about the images or collected them, except for the photographs selected by Tōmatsu. The selection also indicates the architect's vast knowledge of and interest in the premodern and vernacular art of Japan. Isozaki benefitted greatly from the knowledge of Tōmatsu, who had researched for the previous three years for the aforementioned 1966 exhibition, which exhibited as many as 1640 photographs.<sup>305</sup>

All of the historical graphic images included in the installation deal with ephemeral, fictitious and supernatural beings, characterized as *ayashige*. These beings include *yōkai* (monsters), *yūrei* (ghosts), *oni* (demons) and *yōjutsushi* (necromancers), and suggest artists' imaginations and fascinations at that time. These images included the drawing series "Nine Phases of Metamorphosis" that depict the decomposition of the body of a beautiful woman poet, known as Ono no Komachi (c. 825 - c. 900)

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<sup>304</sup> The Edo period (1603-1868), which was ruled by the shoguns of the Tokugawa family, was severely challenged when Commodore Matthew Perry's squadron of four ships appeared in Edo Bay in July 1853. Soon, in March 1854, the Treaty of Kanagawa was entered, which opened two ports to American ships seeking provisions, and allowed a United States consul to take up residence in Shimoda, among many other things. As various governmental reforms (such as the Ansei Reform (1854-1856)) took place, in Japan foreign contacts increased as more concessions were granted. As a result, there emerged chaos and discord in society, and the governing sovereign *bakufu* was thrown into turmoil. During the last years of the *bakufu*, it took strong measures to try to reassert its dominance. Because of the government's involvement with modernization and increasing presence of foreign powers, there emerged strong anti-Western sentiment throughout the country. Such a trend was manifested in many aspects of popular culture, particularly in visual culture. Following the Boshin war (1868-1869), the *bakufu* was abolished. In 1867, Emperor Kōmei died and was succeeded by his minor son Emperor Meiji. And soon the Meiji period began in September 1868, which extended to 1912.

<sup>305</sup> Tōmatsu Shōmei, interview by author, Naha, 20 January 2008.

(Figure 3.13). This series of six drawings visualizes the human body's decomposition step by step, indicating a dissemination of the knowledge of anatomy, which was introduced to Japan in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century through a Japanese translation by Sugita Genpaku, titled *Kaitai shinsho*, of the Dutch book of anatomy *Ontleedkundige Tafelen*.<sup>306</sup> Although the exact date of the creation of the drawings is unknown, and neither has the identity of the artist been established, the genre and content of the drawings can be linked with the thirteenth century thought of *rokudō shisō*. *Rokudō* literally means “six paths,” and is a reference to the six Buddhist realms of existence, including a hell that is considered one of several potential destinations after death, resembling in concept Dante's *Inferno*. By the end of the Heian period in the 13<sup>th</sup> century, the popular apocalyptic *rokudō-shisō* school of thought had emerged.

The *ukiyo-e* prints of historical and legendary figures, extraordinarily colorful, dramatic, bloody and theatrical, can be construed as a sign of the over-maturity and decadence of the late Edo period facing a series of uncertainties and shifts in society as it transitioned from the medieval to the modern, or from emotion to reason.

An artist's (and the general public's) interest in anatomy and death can be also found in a large three-image print by Utagawa Kuniyoshi (1798-1861), a pupil of Hokusai, titled “Sōma no furu-dairi” (Figure. 3.14) published as part of a print series in the period of 1844-1848. In the drawing, a giant human skeleton attacks two samurai soldiers while a woman with a scroll in her hands looks on. Tsukioka Hōnen (1839-92), Kuniyoshi's pupil, is known as part of the last generation of *ukiyo-e* artists. His print series *Eimei nijyū-hachi jyū-ku* in which gruesome tortures and killings of

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<sup>306</sup> Sugita Genpaku (1733 – 1817), a Japanese scholar, is best known for his co-translation of *Kaitai shinsho* (New book of anatomy). Sugita assembled a team of Japanese translators and doctors to translate Johann Adam Kulmus' *Ontleedkundige Tafelen*, when he discovered, after an autopsy, that the western drawings of human organs were much more accurate than the ones in his Chinese handbooks.

humans in premodern theatrical settings are viscerally and gloriously illustrated, are well known as among the best examples of *zankoku-e* (image of cruelty). Two images from the series used in *Electric Labyrinth* are “Naosuke Gonbei” (right in Figure 3.15) and “Inada Kyūzō Shinsuke” (left in Figure 3.15). The former depicts a man scalping another man; the latter describes the tale of Inada Kyūzō Shinsuke, who tortured and slowly killed a pregnant woman, tied and lifted in the air, to avenge his family. In the prints, each image comes with a detailed text of the killing and its background. In Isozaki’s personal files, I found a blue ballpoint pen drawing by the architect, who covered part of the latter to emphasize the suspended body of the tortured woman (Figure 3.16). With Isozaki’s addition, the body emerged in the drawing, as if it were floating in the flattened space. This addition could indicate Isozaki’s interest in manipulating and translating historical visual materials.

Also included in *Electric Labyrinth* were the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century late Edo-period images of *jigoku sōshi* (hell booklets for vernacular story telling)(Figure 3.17), pictures of hell and of people repeatedly tortured, dismembered and then revived. In these types of pictures, the tortured, having committed a sin in their previous lives, have to undergo an eternal cycle of torture, which means that they will never die. These graphic images, selected by the architect, represented for him Japanese notions of “changing, melting, metamorphosing, and decaying,” and arguably they manifested a shift in the society from the premodern era to the modern. The hell drawings were created at the end of the Heian period in the 13<sup>th</sup> century, in reaction to the above-mentioned *rokudō-shisō* school of thought. In these drawings narrativizing the process of going to hell, condemned men and women are burned in a large, vicious and living fire, but they, after all, return to the beginning of the punishment, implying that the endless cycle of punishment itself is a punishment. The series of drawings take viewers through the many levels of hell, with its torments described in pieces of text

and in pictures, including details of crimes and accompanying punishments. Isozaki's selection of these story drawings may raise the question of whether he wanted to address moral and consequential punishment, but it is more pertinent to think that he was interested in the cycle of life, death and hell, as a space that would continue indefinitely. Such an interpretation of circularity is seen in Isozaki's interpretation of the ruins as well as *Electric Labyrinth*.<sup>307</sup>

Other noteworthy drawings used in the installation include Sansei Hōkoku's from his *Tōkaidō Yotsuya Kaidan* series (Figure 3.18), which shows the revenge by a woman, brutally murdered in Yotsuya, in the capital of Edo, against her murderer. A footless woman with a decomposed face haunts the man. This type of figure, floating footless, generally called *yūrei* or a ghost, repeatedly appears (and disappears) in *Electric Labyrinth*. *Yūrei* were believed to fly in the air, and the images of ghosts in the installation would come and go as the revolving walls moved. In addition, Isozaki selected a number of ghost figures in *ukiyo-e* drawings from the late Edo to the early Meiji period, including those of Maruyama Okyō, Kawanabe Gyōsai, Tani Bun'ichi, Ando Hiroshige, Matsumoto Fukō (who is known for his drawing of a blind ghost), and Suzuki Seiichi. One could argue that the popularity of ghost as a subject matter at that time evinces not only the public's desire to view such an ephemeral and supernatural beings but also the society's unstable and shifting conditions.<sup>308</sup> The selected works not only demonstrate Isozaki's vast knowledge of the work of the genre,

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<sup>307</sup> A similar *jigoku-e* series of drawings was also featured in the first full double-page spread in Kurokawa Kishō's 1970 monograph *Kurokawa Kishō no sakuhin*. It implies the importance of the narrative and the construct of time and space seen in the drawings for both Kurokawa and Isozaki in relation to their conception of a city and an urban space.

<sup>308</sup> For discussions on the popularity of ghost art at the end of the Edo period, see *Ukiyoe no yurei (Ghosts in ukiyoe)* ed. Sanpei Nuka (Tokyo: Haga Shoten, 1973).

and his meticulous research but his careful consideration and selection of the visual materials suited for *Electric Labyrinth*.

The photographs selected by Tōmatsu for the curvilinear wall part of the installation were predominantly documentary. The photographs of the burnt city of Nagasaki and its bomb victims were shot by Yamahata in Nagasaki on August 11, 1945 (Figure 3-19).<sup>309</sup> Yamahata was an army photographer, and, on August 10th, he was dispatched to travel to Nagasaki with two other staff and photographed the devastated city, the second day after the dropping of the A-bomb. Theirs were images of unidentifiably burnt and charred bodies, near-death bomb victims, and architectural debris, the burning landscape in the aftermath Nagasaki's bombing, and a few survivors. It included the photograph of a young boy and his mother, both standing, holding a rice ball and gazing at the photographer absentmindedly. (The photograph was partially cropped and used for the August 1945 issue of the journal *Shinkenchiku*, as discussed in Chapter 3.)

Isozaki's decisions to use these photographs of a documentary nature over Tōmatsu's photographs from his Nagasaki series may be based on several reasons. First, it would have been difficult to crop, collage and manipulate Tōmatsu's photographs for the installation, as they were created as Tōmatsu's artistic photography. Second, what Isozaki needed was to create a visual cascade of anonymous images so that the architect could freely construct his own image-based

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<sup>309</sup>These photos appear in the catalogue of the paramount exhibition, *The History of Japanese Photography* and organized by the Japan Association of Photographers (JPS) in 1968. This exhibition, initiated by Tōmatsu Shōmei, was particularly important because it was the first exhibition of the history of photography in Japan that focuses on Japanese photographic expressions, as opposed to photographic technology. *Shashin 100 nen: Nihonjin ni yoru shashin hyōgen no rekishiten*. Tokyo: Nihon Shashinka Kyōkai, 1968. Tōmatsu was one of the five publishing (catalogue) committee members at JPS, together with Watanabe Yoshio, Hamaya Hiroshi, Hayashi Tadahiko and Saitō Ryōkichi.

environment. What he most needed were raw and affective images. Arguably, Isozaki aimed to let a variety of images speak to each other without the intervention of any particular artist. He was interested in exercising an accumulative power of documentary photographs to tell a story in response to the movement of those who walk within the installation. Photographs included in the installation were close-up photographs of a mummy (Figure 3.20) or a blackened body found in the burnt city. These photographs share a scientific or medical sensibility and would play a role in reminding us that we would one day all revert to these archetypes of human remains. In these black and white photographs, a viewer does not see a trace of blood. Rather, in the system of consistent black and white visual order, death is frozen and depicted matter-of-factly. These photographs are all emotionally detached, despite their contents often being of dead atomic victims, whether humans or animals, including completely burnt bodies and faces. (Yamahata's photographs will be discussed again in relation to the installation in the Space Frame of the Expo '70, "The Wall of Contradiction," in Chapter 5 of the dissertation.) Another photograph, which Isozaki included in the installation, was the photograph of a human shadow burned onto a building step, shot at the time of the dropping of the bomb in Hiroshima. The photograph is the index of a person who once existed and perished, and also accentuates the ephemeral nature of human beings in comparison to the permanence of the city.

The destroyed city in photography is wrapped in a veil of silence, and seems calm, non-sensational, and even beautiful. These black and white photographs, even those with grotesque and shocking depictions, could easily allow viewers to lapse into amnesia regarding the war. But, in the installation, fragmented and repeated together with colorful and theatrical prints in a cybernetic environment, the photographs forcefully presented their existence and the phenomena depicted therein. The images,

brought to life in the moving structure of *Electric Labyrinth*, collectively underscored/highlighted Isozaki's attitude as anti-authoritarian and iconoclastic, destroying conventional perceptions and interpretations that could be associated with each of the images.

To Isozaki, Hiroshima was the archetype of a city that vanished in a second with the atomic bomb but revived physically and organically in a matter of only a few years. To illustrate this, in the other part of the installation, juxtaposing photography and projected images, he reconstructed such a life cycle of the archetype, presenting a viewers with a dialectics of disappearance and emergence, and a "process" of the life, death and regeneration of a city.<sup>310</sup> Having witnessed his hometown, Ōita City, disappear instantaneously during American air raids in 1945, he believed that any Japanese city may completely vanish in the blink of an eye, and likewise that any urban Japanese architecture is destined to disappear because the cities and architectures in the nation, mostly made of wood, were not constructed as a permanent

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<sup>310</sup> Isozaki recalls his experience in having witnessed the air raids of Ōita city, as follows: "The fire bombs, coloring the night of various cities of Japan, looked like elegant fireworks. My memory of escaping from them overlapped with the excitement I experienced in a mirror maze or a horror show at an amusement park. There was indeed a feel of fear but even when I exhausted myself from fleeing the fires I still wanted to remain there. Perhaps I knew instinctively that running from the chaos meant there would be nothing left, only vacancy. The following morning, I saw a completely burnt field. After I heard that Hiroshima, which existed over a bay from where I was (Ōita), vanished, and I saw it (its completely ruined landscape) in a photograph in a newspaper, I still did not comprehend what the momentary (atomic) flash I saw meant. But when I saw a film where a mushroom cloud was formed off the Bikini Atoll, it brought me both fear and ecstasy. Throwing myself to the wind caused by the bomb, and assimilating myself in the void was nothing more than a desire for thanatos, but I was overwhelmed by a feeling of separation from my own body and of floating in zero gravity, to be absorbed into a dark spot in the cosmos. Springing, expanding and scattering. I wonder if the vacancy absorbs me." From Isozaki Arata, "Theory of Ruins" in *Shin kenchiku no mokujiroku* (New apocalypse of architecture)(Tokyo: Heibonsha, 2003). This publication is a photobook by photographer Miyamoto Ryūji, featuring his photographs of ruins shot in Japan and Hong Kong.

form. Isozaki argues that even modern Japanese cities do not have the same meaning as European cities, that they present a different type of ruins, and that they do continue to persist, just as Hiroshima and Nagasaki re-emerged after their utter devastation in 1945. Commenting on the difference in nature between European and Japanese ruins, Isozaki characterized Japanese ruins as a condition where everything was completely burnt down to ashes, ashes of a vegetable nature (*shokubutsu-sei*), while ruins in the West have the nature of minerals (*kōbutsu-sei*).<sup>311</sup> Looking at the contemporary situation of a city in Japan, Isozaki characterizes Tokyo as being “in a liquid state of constant organic reproduction and division... after the urban environment continues to increase in fluidity... viewed in terms of the time axis of transformation...”<sup>312</sup>

Borrowing from the mathematician and founder of the field of cybernetics, Norbert Wiener, who explained, “(the) city is neither so tightly bound together that the transformation of one aspect necessitates the destruction of the unity of other aspects nor so loosely bound together that all things of the same options can come into being with equal ease,”<sup>313</sup> Isozaki observed and expressed the importance of letting “process” dictate the life of the city. He declares, “(We) have before our eyes fragments of cities in the process of flux. The fragments constantly shift into succeeding phases. In a city of this kind, where exterior appearances move and change without cease, *process alone is trustworthy*.”<sup>314</sup>

The projection part of the installation, based on a large rectangular found photograph of the ruined Hiroshima, with a montage of two collapsed steel frames of a megastructure, is titled “Hiroshima Returned to Ruins Again” (Figure 3.5) and

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<sup>311</sup> Arata Isozaki, “Kenchikuka Isozaki Arata-san ni intabyūsuru: haikyo to yakeato, seiyō to Nihon no kenchiku kūkan,” (Interview of architect Isozaki Arata: ruins and burnt fields, architectural space of the West and Japan), *d/SIGN*, 16 (July 2008), 18.

<sup>312</sup> Isozaki, “Invisible City” in *Arata Isozaki*, trans. Ken Oshima, 194.

<sup>313</sup> Ibid.

<sup>314</sup> Ibid.



unmistakably represents Isozaki's concept of "process." I posit that this montage suggests two scenarios about the city: the city's looking forward to the future with survived frameworks of megastructures; or the city's complete death with architectural debris. Under either scenario, the photomontage conveys Isozaki's message that the designer "must attempt to foresee from the present moment the ultimate form of the object (or the city) he is designing...and the ultimate condition is the point of origin to which all things begin."<sup>315</sup> The featured megastructures (Figure 3.22) admittedly bear a slight resemblance to the utopian and Constructivist Monument to the Third International by Vladimir Tatlin. However, Isozaki's inclusion of the structures, because of their ambiguity in the sequence of time, mean that the entire photomontage could imply either the forward-looking nature of the remaining structures or the death of the city. My archival research has traced the structures' models to photographs contained in Isozaki's picture scrapbook (Figure 3.22), where he had previously collected photographs of collapsed structures in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Among the photographs pasted in the scrapbook, photographs of the Hiroshima Atomic Dome, and several remaining steel frame structures are clearly recognizable. These photographs suggest not only the architect's sourcing of photography as an elastic and synthetic material to construct his theory about the city, but also the general and ample availability of these photographs in the forms of a book or a printed medium (e.g., a newspaper and a magazine) in the visual commerce of the time.

On the photomontage, three projectors superimposed images of unrealized megastructures designed by Japan's emerging Metabolist architects, as well as Isozaki, such as Kurokawa Kishō, Kikutake Kiyonori and Ōtaka Masato, whose works and images were discussed in Chapter 2. Each of the projectors carried approximately eighty images of their unbuilt designs, and projected them against the Hiroshima

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<sup>315</sup> Ibid.

landscape, providing the audience with kaleidoscopic and flickering experiences of the future merging into the past. The projection was based on De Carlo's suggestion that Isozaki introduced works by his contemporaries in the installation in response to the theme of the triennial, "Great Numbers." But importantly, having made a clear distinction vis-a-vis Metabolist designs in the interpretation of time-space, Isozaki arguably considered megastructures as a product of the passing utopian Modernist architecture, in agreement with architectural critic Reyner Banham, who argues that by the early 1970s the megastructures were a vestige of the glorious time of the past, second machine age of Modernist architecture.<sup>316</sup> Based on a similar argument, the placement of the utopian megastructures emphasized Isozaki's belief that the future imagined by Japanese modernist architects (notably the Metabolists) was already in the process of ruination. Here, it is important to pay attention to the major differences in the interpretation of time and place between Isozaki and the Metabolists.<sup>317</sup> Isozaki

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<sup>316</sup> Reyner Banham, *Megastructure: Urban Futures of the Recent Past*, (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1976), 7-11.

<sup>317</sup> Isozaki explains his difference from Metabolists as follows: "(It) is all about the notion of time. Metabolism has taken the form of an avant-garde movement, looking at a moment in history as the goal/telos, and a utopia, and they organize a movement (immediately before that) to push forward. With planning, they have attempted to move forward in an organized manner, trusting that time is an absolute notion and is linear. . . . There, going beyond the notion of Darwinism that things evolve based on the rules of nature, the city makes progress based on a plan. There, time flows in a line toward the objective telos. Time is presumed to be linear and absolute." Isozaki did not agree with such a linear notion of time. To him, it was an ideal fiction. (At that time, a wide range of subjects, such as nation, region, city, architecture, economy and society, were believed to be subject to planning. In other words, it was assumed possible to subject them to scientific planning. Isozaki disagreed.) Isozaki saw the city as constantly moving through a process (i.e., moving from Point A to Point B). There, there is only a process that circulates without any specific beginning or end. Isozaki Arata, "Fuka katei" (Incubation period) *Tairon kenchiku to jikan: Isozaki Arata to Doi Yoshitake* (Dialogue on architecture and time: Isozaki Arata and Doi Yoshitake)(Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2001) 64-67.

later explained that their difference can be understood as follows: Metabolism saw “time” as absolute and linear, while Isozaki saw it as relative and circular.

Isozaki’s distinction from the Metabolists was delineated in his installation in the 1962 exhibition, *Mirai toshi to seikatsu* (Future cities and lifestyles), which took place at the Seibu Department Store in Tokyo. Isozaki was invited by the Metabolist architects to join them to display his vision of a future city. But in the end, they rejected his photo-based montage, entitled “Fuka katei,” meaning hatching process, a photomontage he created based on a found photo of a ruined Greek temple with a Doric column. The Metabolists found the work offensive and presenting an entirely different view from theirs. However, with the intervention of architect Kikutake Kiyonori, Isozaki was able to stay in the exhibition, but instead had to create a different work. He created an installation that required participation of the general public, titled “Joint Core System” (Figure 3-24). In order to test his concept of a “joint core system” (which is based on multiple vertical shaft-like cores, with living spaces linked up between them), he first placed flat an aerial photo of downtown Tokyo in an enclosed frame of 3 feet x 4 feet, and left nails and wires of various colors for the audience. The audience was free to hammer a nail and link up, using a wire, the nails, creating a contour of the city. As a result, by the end of the exhibition, the audience had created a spider’s web-like system of the city, a complex, organic, and free-flow structure that exceeded the size of the frame. Additionally, the interactive installation created a system of operation for allowing a city to grow. To Isozaki, the space emerged therein was an archetype of the city without any plan or clear sense of beginning and end.

The rejected photomontage/drawing, “Incubation process,” (Figure 3.25 top) soon found a place to be seen. It was included in the special April 1962 issue (titled *Gendai no imēji* (Contemporary images)) of the art journal *Bijutsu techō*, edited by the

art critic and poet Takiguchi Shūzō. It included images (mostly photographs, including photographs of objects and architecture) either selected or created by twenty artistic figures, accompanied by their writings.<sup>318</sup> In the six pages allotted to Isozaki in the issue (Figure 3.21), he includes the three-page decaying process of a Japanese city, as visualized in an aerial photograph by Futagawa Yukio, which Isozaki then collaged with his own drawing of a matrix system of the city's infrastructure, as well as aerial and side views (Figure 3.26 top) of his joint core system in a drawing. Isozaki's section of the journal was concluded with the photomontage/drawing "Hatching process." His photo-based works highlight the medium's importance in his process of imagining a city. The aerial photograph gave the architect a vast canvas to manipulate its scale, texture and surface and install therein his own system on a fractured, blurry, decayed city. With respect to "Incubation process" (Figure 3.25 top), Isozaki later recalls that he happened to find the photograph of a ruin in an art book, which he then photocopied, cut and pasted as a base. The impact of the found photograph of the Greek temple was extremely powerful to Isozaki, but at that time he did not know where it came from. Thirty years later, when he visited the ancient city of Agrigento, a city on the southern coast of Sicily, Italy, he discovered that the photographed structure was indeed the ruined Temple of Hera, which still stands.<sup>319</sup> He filled part of the photocopy with his own drawing of a systematic "joint core" architecture that resembles the core system he had drawn for his unbuilt Shinjuku Project (Figure 3.26). Isozaki recalls that despite the lack of the resources in early 1960s Japan, there were always ample photographs in publications, which often became the sources for his

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<sup>318</sup> The twenty figures include the most respected artists at that time, such as Okamoto Tarō, Sugiura Kōhei, photographer Futagawa Yukio, Tōmatsu Shōmei, Isozaki Arata, Ōtsuji Kiyoji, and Arakawa Shūsaku.

<sup>319</sup> Arata Isozaki, "Interview of Architect Isozaki Arata: Ruins and Burnt Fields, Architectural Space of the West and Japan," 15.

imaginary creation. In the montage/drawing, Isozaki connected seamlessly the image of a futuristic megastructure of that joint-core system and a highway to the photographed ruins of the temple. In the resultant work, part of the new core structure has already collapsed and begun to decay. This suggests visually that the past and the future are mingled in the structure, unveiling Isozaki's peculiar concept of time-and-space, *ma*, in which a "present" moment is found in the ruins but the present moment itself has already begun to decay, indicating a disorder and collapse of the conventional notion of time-and-place.

The journal section "Hatching process" was accompanied by Isozaki's own poetry-like captions, explaining the seemingly enigmatic montage/drawing; together with the captions, the montage images have become the architect's manifesto of his philosophy on urbanism specific to Japan at that time. The position reflected in the captions is consistent in his early writings and designs (mostly unbuilt) and even his later curatorial projects.<sup>320</sup> The captions read as follows:

Our city's transformation begins with a massive crack. When a melting and formless material swallow and destroys the city full of virtue and ease a new hatching begins. . . . The hatching process denies the static pattern that preexisting roads and architecture shared, instead requiring a system that is based on the principle of movement and growth. They, including various types of speed, become a group that grows in a chain as a mutually independent function, and the city space becomes a multi-dimensional matrix. What is necessary for this type of city is not the entire picture (limited and complete) but the mechanism of parts that enable various entire pictures and predictable parts. Such a structure multiplies itself and

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<sup>320</sup> For example, for the Japanese pavilion in the 1996 Venice Architectural Biennial, he created an exhibition of photography and objects attempting to convey the ambiance of the ruined city Kobe after the Kobe Earthquake in 1995.

fluctuates. At the same time, the entire picture must be constantly denied and thereby collapse. For that reason, our city never fixes itself and is always in transition. The city is a process. . . . The mechanism set there must allow various types of freely growing space to coexist and unite. The column, shown here – joint core – is a shaft that includes inside itself a vertical conducting wire, and while supporting the living space placed thereon, connects the movement of automobiles and people beneath. This joint core is the starting point from which originates city space. The city, hatched therefore, is destined to collapse. *The ruin is a future vision of our city, and this future city itself is a ruin.* Our contemporary city there lives a short amount of time and emits energy, and again is reduced to material. Our every single proposal and effort will be buried there, and again a hatching machine will be built. That will be the future.<sup>321</sup> (emphasis added)

The captions reflect Isozaki's belief that the city will decay (or disappear) but revive as long as it reverts back to its origin. It means that within his mind with respect to any species, culture, life, thought or method, its original form (at birth) predetermines its subsequent development. Even if its content develops and mutates over time, it always reverts back to its origin and continues to copy its life cycle, provided that it maintains its identity.

Part of Isozaki's fascination with ruins as a metaphor is that it requires a viewer to imagine what has been missed. Being aware of the art historical significance of the ruins, such as Piranesi's drawings of the Roman ruins (Figure 3.25 bottom), he resisted simply relating a decimated Japanese city to such a European reference; for him, the nature of the ruins represented in the West and in Japan were far too different. More

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<sup>321</sup> Isozaki, *Kūkan e*, 36-8.

importantly, Isozaki's reference to the art of Giovanni Battista Piranesi points out the architect's emphasis on imagination as an important element of the concept of process. Piranesi's works have been mentioned in Isozaki's writings and interviews on more than a couple of occasions. Isozaki's initial interest in the 18<sup>th</sup> century artist began with his print series, *Carceri d'invenzione* (or Imaginary Prisons)(Figure 3.27), particularly the extremely complex expression of space and the space's shift to ruins. He found it labyrinth-like, where lights cast from various angles and depth of the space is unknown, and the space eventually turns into a ruin.<sup>322</sup> To project a coherent series of visual presentation of the prison, it would require a good amount of a viewer's imagination to fill the gaps among the sixteen prints. Similarly, the Japanese architect found Piranesi's map work of the ancient Roman Campo Marzio intriguing because some parts of the map are renderings of the artist's imagination, while some can be traced to established archeological studies of the city. Isozaki viewed Piranesi's imaginative excess beyond reality (or what was built) as a potential methodology to fully embody the notion of process, and arguably it inspired him later to create his discourse of the unbuilt.<sup>323</sup>

Isozaki's unbuilt projects from the late 1950s share some intellectual common ground with the installation *Electric Labyrinth* in that they both are based on his imagination, a notion of the city as a process, and a keen sense of visual images. As Isozaki revealed with part of such a system in his earlier photomontage/drawing, "Hatching Process," he established the concept and design of the multifunctional core module matrix and system, or simply a joint core, as the main vehicle to realize his design concept for promoting the notion of the systematic and organizational growth of the city. He then applied it in an unbuilt design "City in the Air" (Figure 3.28). In

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<sup>322</sup> Arata Isozaki, "Interview of Architect Isozaki Arata: Ruins and Burnt Fields, Architectural Space of the West and Japan," 30.

<sup>323</sup> Ibid.

the “City in the Air,” a single column (part of the core system) houses a vertical facility (such as a lift and duct) that connects the ground level and the space in the air. The entire city is represented in this single column. The structure creates a city life in the air as well as one on the ground level, creating a multi matrix city.

### **Between Art and Architecture**

In relation to *Electric Labyrinth*, it is important to trace Isozaki’s stance toward avant-garde art in terms of collectivism. Isozaki’s affiliation with avant-garde art began in the late 1950s. In particular, he was connected to the artist collective Neo-Dada that had its base in one of the collective members Yoshimura Masunobu’s atelier designed by Isozaki, White House (Figure 3.29). His relationship with the collective was extremely important to the architect because they had shared a similar avant-garde concern and a sense of crisis about the city of Tokyo as well as the Japanese authorities. The artists roamed around the Shinjuku district of downtown Tokyo, known for its “lowbrow” drinking and cultural establishments, including avant-garde theaters, and gathering places like Fūgetsudo café and the Pit Inn jazz house. Fully aware that he was strictly an on-looker, Isozaki saw most of the important art exhibitions and many art happenings in Tokyo around that time, internalizing these avant-garde art experiences for the formation of his artistic identity.

With the spirit of “anti-art (*han geijutsu*),” rebelling against the authorities (including museums, the art market and art academy), the artists in Neo-Dada created art of an ephemeral nature and performed away from white-cube spaces, often in the streets of Tokyo. In the process, they became part of an emerging urbanism while dismantling the Modernist principles and hierarchy of art, and the division between art



and the city.<sup>324</sup> In 1960, Tokyo was rife with protests against the 1960 ratification of the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty (Anpo) and the art scene, which was increasingly influenced by the French avant-garde Art Informel style “in which paint was spread thickly on large surfaces with no recognizable images,” a style championed by French artist Michel Tapie. Many Japanese artists resisted such a European influence at their pivotal avant-garde moment. Thus, Neo Dada artists took part in the protest demonstrations at the National Diet Building in Nagata-cho, shouting alternatively “Down with *anpo*,” and “Down with *anfo*,” the latter being the Japanese abbreviation of Informel.<sup>325</sup> Observing the artists in this environment, Isozaki desired to establish a new methodology to create architecture in the city in flux, as reflected in the following statement:

The city was nothing but change and accumulation. What I had in common with those artists who hung out in Shinjuku was a sense of living in this city and an urge to give “shape” to the changes being generated there. We wanted

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<sup>324</sup> Established in 1958, *Yomiuri andepandan ten* (*Yomiuri independent exhibition*) was one of a few group exhibitions where any artist could exhibit by paying an entry fee. Because of its liberal exhibition policy, it later became a central venue for avant-garde art in postwar Japan. For example, in the 1958 exhibition, “there were paintings made by throwing asphalt, piling up plaster, and scattering rice husks on the canvas, and ‘objects’ made of empty cans and rags hung on a bundle of bamboo, straw copes and ropes spread out on the floor, and piles of oil drums. . . . Michiaki Kawakita called this phenomenon ‘rockabilly frenzy.’” Hariu Ichirō, “The Phases of Neo-Dada in Postwar Art,” in *Neo-Dada Japan 1958-1998: Arata Isozaki and the Artists of “White House,”* (Ōita, Japan: Ōita City and Ōita City Board of Education, 1998), 276-77. The twelfth exhibition in March 1960 was marked as the beginning of the “anti-art” movement. Artists like Arakawa Shūsaku, Kudō Tetsumi, Shinohara Ushio, Itoi Kanji, and Kaneko Tsuruzō exhibited, and this particular exhibition led to the birth of Neo-Dada. Chiba Shigeo, *Gendai bijutsu itsudatsushi 1945-1985* (Tokyo: Shōbunsha, 1986), 71. Later the avant-garde nature of the exhibition entries escalated, the exhibition organizers placed so-called “censorship” rules, and the exhibition discontinued in 1964 after their 14<sup>th</sup> and last annual exhibition in 1963.

<sup>325</sup> Hariu Ichirō, “The Phases of Neo-Dada in Postwar Art,” 277.

to somehow portray this appearance of the city of Tokyo, using what was produced by the city as it began to make strange fetal movements, that is to say, the detritus expelled by the city. . . . There was a shared perception that the standards produced by the system of art, exhibitions, architecture, and the media were beginning to break down and that we should completely destroy them.<sup>326</sup>

Isozaki's involvement as a close on-looker of Neo-Dada offered a chance to further consider dismantling the static Modernist principles of architecture and the city. Neo-Dada was established by nine artists in 1960—Akasegawa Genpei, Arakawa Shūsaku, Ishibashi Betsujin, Iwasaki Kunihiro, Ueno Norizō, Kazakura Shō, Shinohara Ushio, Toyoshima Soroku, and Yoshimura Masunobu—many of with whom Isozaki had been familiar from their hometown Ōita. The artists' aggressive anti-art and anti-authority attitude are as expressed in the declaration of Akasegawa: "We have appeared on this seething, red-hot earth of the 20.6<sup>th</sup> century, in which to be massacred is to become the butchers ourselves."<sup>327</sup> For them, the streets in Shinjuku were a place to exhibit, as seen in Yoshimura's street performance of karate chops into the legs of an overturned chair.<sup>328</sup> Another collective member, the painter Ushio Shinohara, engaged in a series of paintings performed and created in public, called "Boxing Painting."

In Tokyo, having attended these street performance events, and exchanged ideas with the artists, Isozaki felt an urge to revolt against the authorities, but on a different magnitude. Isozaki had felt earlier that the excessively avant-garde nature of

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<sup>326</sup> Arata Isozaki, "Runaway System," in *Nihon no natsu 1960-64* (Japanese summers 1960-64) (Mito: Art Tower Mito, 1997), 80-81.

<sup>327</sup> Shinohara Ushio, *Zen'ei no michi* [The avant-garde road] (Tokyo: Bijutsu Shuppansha, 1968).

<sup>328</sup> Hariu Ichirō "The Phases of Neo-Dada in Postwar Art," 276-77.

the collective would destroy itself in the future. He sensed that the passionate intensity of the collective was going to lead to “the inevitable destination of an auto-intoxicated radicalism.”<sup>329</sup> For this reason, he maintained some distance from the collective, creating his stance of being *ryōgiteki*, of taking two seemingly contradictory positions.

It was while he was in the street observing radical art performances, sharing the spirit of anti-authority, that he obtained the commission of his first built work, Ōita Medical Hall (1960), from a powerful medical association in his hometown of Ōita. Further, in or around 1962, he was approached with the opportunity to design the Ōita Prefectural Library. The project oriented Isozaki to focus on his first design work as an independent architect.

While Isozaki laid out the foundation of his career as an architect, designing individual buildings including those mentioned above, he continued to act on his desire to be involved in the more conceptual work of designing cities. Simultaneously, he maintained a stance of anti-authoritarianism. Such a desire was shown in Isozaki’s participation in the 1966 exhibition *From Space to Environment* (Kūkan kara kankyō e).<sup>330</sup> In the exhibition, he acted as an exhibition designer (Figure 3.30) as well as a participating artist. Subtitled “a comprehensive exhibition of painting, sculpture, photography, design, and music,” this exhibition was a six-day-long inter-media group show in November 1966 that took place at the eighth floor exhibition space of the prominent Matsuya Department Store in Ginza, Tokyo. A total of 38 artists, music composers, graphic and industrial designers, critics, and architects collaborated to create an environment in which a viewer could immerse herself in artistic works.

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<sup>329</sup> Isozaki, “Runaway System,” 81.

<sup>330</sup> The exhibition took place only for six days, from November 11 to 16, at the gallery space of the Matsuya Department Store, in the Ginza district of Tokyo. This space had become the home for the Japan Design Committee and had exhibited numerous exhibitions of Japan’s modern designs, featuring a number of artists, designers and architects.

Critic and curator of the exhibition Takiguchi Shūzō argues that an environment should be interpreted as a flexible, movable and inclusive space (rather than an enclosing “environment”) that would indefinitely shift the relationship between a subject (a viewer) and an object (a work of art). The environment also allows a viewer to experience an artwork more freely. “Environment” placed subjectivity back in the viewer, instead of in the art itself or an artist. The art of environment (not environmental art) required self-criticism of a viewer himself. Art’s physicality and spatiality would invite and involve a viewer, and create a sense of oneness among artists of the works exhibited as well as their viewers.<sup>331</sup>

Takiguchi defines an environment (or *kankyō*) as “not a mere notion but a continuity of countless ripples that overlap and form an entirety of the whole, a shift from an environment where one stands alone on a deserted island.”<sup>332</sup> In his mind, Jackson Pollock’s drip paintings and Louise Nevelson’s large assemblage installation of found objects were examples of such an environment. Takiguchi suggests the need “to consider traditional art, painting and sculpture, and an individual architecture in the context of an environment, rather than an isolated whole. The environment is as important as, if not more than, the individual objects, because they breathe the surrounding and absorb all of its reality.”<sup>333</sup>

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<sup>331</sup> Takiguchi Shūzō, “Kankyō ni tsuite: aru jyōkyō karano hatsugen”(About the environment: a statement from a particular circumstance), *Bijutsu techō*, special issue *Kūkan kara kankyō e* (From space to environment), (November, 1966), 1-4.

<sup>332</sup> Ibid.

<sup>333</sup> After the exhibition, the participating artists and designers organized a group called “Enbairomento no Kai” (The Environment Society) to further pursue the purposes of the exhibition. In its manifesto, the society states that the preexisting static and harmonious relationship between a viewer and an artwork has broken down and the notion of site (*ba no gainen*) has shifted to the environment, a non-static/dynamic ((dōteki na)) “environment” involving both viewers and artwork. With this mission, the society aimed at creating “environmental designs” where the city is considered as one subject, an environment where all is positively connected rather than a totality of fixed parts of architectures, space of *ma*, function and form.

In *From Space to Environment*, Isozaki displayed a colorfully painted model of his design of a new bank building in Ōita (Figure 3.31). Art critic Tōno Yoshiaki, in his interview of Isozaki, commented on it as follows: “(Its) colors are interpreted as a bundle of light that covers space. In other words, it seems that Isozaki intends to invade the space with colors of light, instead of treating it as three dimensional concrete space, and to render it non-existent.”<sup>334</sup>

Isozaki defined the exhibition space as empirical and ephemeral, and felt that “the idea of body involvement” in art and architecture came out in the exhibition design. In his essay “Yami no kūkan” (Space of darkness), Isozaki argues that the concept of time and space suggested by modernist intellectuals of the West, like Sigfried Giedion, is not applicable in postwar Japan, and proposes instead that time is a process and space is an environment in which individuals could perceive with their bodies, using all their senses.<sup>335</sup> In order to realize this position, he kept the lighting for the exhibition site dim, where he created a spectrum of light with a unique/unorthodox scale of gradation. His exhibition design was connected to his notion of darkness and emptiness. In this scheme, Isozaki set complete darkness (*yami*) at one end and emptiness (*kyo*) at the other end of the spectrum, arguing that the former was related to architecture and the body, the latter to the city and media.<sup>336</sup> Therefore, the exhibition became a space hovering between the two different types of properties, which can be also observed in his later installation *Electric Labyrinth*.<sup>337</sup>

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<sup>333</sup> Isozaki Arata, “About Kankyō: a dialogue between Isozaki Arata and Tōno Yoshiaki,” special issue on *Kūkan kara kankyō e*, in *Bijutsu techō* (Nov. 1966), 4 and 118.

<sup>334</sup> Isozaki Arata, “About Kankyō: a dialogue between Isozaki Arata and Tōno Yoshiaki,” special issue on *Kūkan kara kankyō e*, in *Bijutsu techō* (Nov. 1966), 91.

<sup>335</sup> Isozaki Arata, “Isozaki Arata Interview with Hino Naohiko, Turning Point, *From Space to Environment*,” *Ten Plus One*, 48 (March 2008), 196 and 197.

<sup>336</sup> *Ibid.*, 196.

<sup>337</sup> Obrist, *Iconoclash*, 376.

## Images and Texts

Isozaki's extraordinary sense of reading and interpreting an image, in relation to space-time, can be found in his interpretation of Andreas Feininger's photograph, titled "Jewish Cemetery in Queens, New York" (1994)(Figure 3.32). Originally having appeared in the artist's 1954 monograph, *The Face of New York*, this image, shot with a super telephoto lens, juxtaposes numerous gravestones in a Jewish cemetery in Queens against the skyscrapers of Manhattan (among which is the United Nations' Secretariat Building designed by Le Corbusier and Oscar Niemeyer). Fascinated with the complexity of space and time represented in the photograph, Isozaki hurried to the site where it was taken, upon his arrival in New York City for the first time. He found that the photograph dealt with several dichotomies, such as death versus life and the vernacular versus the modern, extrapolated from a periphery of the metropolis through a photographic medium. The photograph epitomizes the non-linearity of the time-space relationship as well as the eschatology in architecture and the city that Isozaki had argued for. The image enabled him to intellectually pursue a dialectical exercise of life, death and space in-between, and to further imagine the space-time relationship of the city.

Many of his writings in the 1960s reflect his ways of looking, examining a city photographically, often from a distant vantage point, such as from an airplane. His experiences of flying over major cities in the world in 1964, including Istanbul, Istafan, Florence, New York, Los Angeles, Rio de Janeiro, and Athens were materialized into a series of his writings, accompanied with aerial photographs shot by Futagawa Yukio, in a photographic essay series, "Sekai no shizen to zōkei (The world's nature and its plasticity)," which appeared in multiple issues of the art journal, *Mizue*, in 1965. In the journal's June 1965 issue, Isozaki wrote another essay, "Rojō no

kankaku” (A perception from the road), illustrated with eighteen (seven of which were taken from an airplane) black and white photographs, with a focus on the concept of circulation, the fourth function of the city found in the CIAM’s Athens Convention in 1933.<sup>338</sup> His essay first focuses on a pedestrian’s (or driver’s) experience in a city space, which unfolds as she proceeds on the road, and on a successive series of perceptual experiences. An aerial photograph of the highways of Los Angeles (Figure 3.33), one of Futagawa’s photographs in the issue, is given centrality in the essay. It depicts the city’s intertwined and multi-layered superhighway and its spider’s web-like structures. This particular flying experience and the photographs led to Isozaki’s later essay, “Mienai toshi (The invisible city),” which first appeared in 1967.

In the essay, Isozaki emphasizes that by flying over Los Angeles, he found that a conventional city form was vanishing without leaving a clear and comprehensive image of the city, unlike the experience of looking at the bird’s-eye view favored in European paintings of cities. Instead, he found the city filled with complex sign systems, such as one found on a highway that navigates a driver to a certain location. Commenting on this, he states, “(t)he city is becoming more kaleidoscopic with infinitely recurring and fragmented colors, refractions and reflections. Urban space is becoming a woven pattern of abstract codes, . . . the various spatial compositional elements are reduced to codes, and attention is paid solely to their relationships.”<sup>339</sup> Characterizing a contemporary metropolis as a fictitious construct of vast information, Isozaki defines the city as an imaginary and impenetrable space, that is to say, a fiction. He traces such a space to historical Japanese city spaces, like one found in a city map from the Edo period, a *mandala* drawing, or a *rakuchū-rakugai zu byōbu* (a screen

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<sup>338</sup> The four functions are set as follows: to live, to work, to enjoy and to circulate.

<sup>339</sup> Isozaki, *Kūkan e*, 380.

painting of scenes in and around Kyoto), where spaces are made up of signs, symbols and information.

In his writings from the late 1960s and early 1970s (such as a piece for the anthology, *City Spaces of Japan* (1968)(*Nihon no toshi kūkan*) and an essay with the same title in his *Kūkan e*, Isozaki points out that, historically, Japanese urban space has been expressed using a distribution diagram of symbols,<sup>340</sup> represented as a space of a hybrid complex of lines and images.<sup>341</sup> To Isozaki, the city is an abstraction. That is to say, when it comes to his methodology of analyzing contemporary urban space, he emphasizes the importance of abstracting and symbolizing space by repeating (Yasu, you highlighted this—and I agree it needs work; I'm not quite sure what you mean by this phrase) the inside of an image.<sup>342</sup> For this reason, Isozaki argues that urban design needs to be reorganized on the basis of invisible elements, such as a road sign system and other codified information woven into the city.<sup>343</sup> This argument requires designers to rely on imagination as well as experience when engaged in their design practice.

## Texts

One must...look at Isozaki's writings and projects of the time to understand his

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<sup>340</sup> Isozaki, *Kūkan e*, 122.

<sup>341</sup> Isozaki, *Kūkan e*, 134.

<sup>342</sup> Ibid.

<sup>343</sup> Positioning the city as an abstract product of the imagination, a virtual space, like Kafka's castle, Isozaki points out that the city has a spatial system that can be analyzed and actualized by means of a computerized system, and that the city could be governed by cybernetics. Isozaki defines cybernetic environments as follows: (1) the environment will be enveloped in a protective membrane for the sake of preserving definite, balanced conditions; (2) spaces will be extensively interchangeable; (3) the environment will include a wide variety of movable equipment; (4) a man-machine system will be developed; and (5) the system will possess a self-instructing feedback channel. Isozaki, *Isozaki Arata*, 197.



anxiety with modernism and its overwhelming reliance on the reason of a scientific and technological hegemony that rained destruction on his country during the 1940s.<sup>344</sup>  
--Peter Eisenman

Isozaki's early essays, most of which were first published in architecture and art journals such as *Shinkenchiku*, *Kenchiku bunka* and *Bijutsu techō*, beginning in the early 1960s, helped to further visualize and develop his ideas of the city and urban design in Japan's postwar era. Through this process, Isozaki positioned writing as a medium as important as design itself, and successfully established the field of architecture as an interdisciplinary medium, aligning it with visual art, music, photography, performance, and even literature. He established a discursive field to encompass architecture and urbanism in the broadest sense, where writing was a crucial means to achieve this goal. His writings appeared not only in architectural and art journals but also in journals of art and literary criticism. For example, although a bit later, his involvement with critics such as Asada Akira and Naoki Sakai, in the journal of contemporary criticism, *Hihyō kūkan* (space for criticism), is an unprecedented act for design professionals in postwar Japan. As a result, it has marked his polemical and dynamic approach to urbanism and urban design as an aspect of contemporary intellectual discourse.

The core of Isozaki's writings from and around the 1960s can be found in his two anthologies: the first, entitled *Kūkan e: kongen e to sokō suru shikō* (Towards space: thought reverting to its origins), which includes approximately 30 essays he wrote and published mainly in architecture journals between 1960 and 1970;<sup>345</sup> and

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<sup>344</sup> Ibid., 12.

<sup>345</sup> One peculiarity of the book is that the period of the essays (1960-1970) covers the five-year period of his involvement in the architectural planning for the World Expo 1970, but not a single essay discussing the Expo is included. Isozaki's role as a designer for the Expo's Festival Plaza was well-known but he has been extremely reluctant to speak on his involvement, other than to state that he regretted having been

the other, published in 1975 and entitled *Kenchiku no kaitai: 1968 nen no kenchiku jōkyō* (The dismantling of architecture: the state of architecture in 1968), that brings together his eight essays about contemporary architects such as Hans Hollein, Archigram, Cedric Price, Robert Venturi, and Superstudio/Archizoom at the moment of the dissolution of Modernist architecture. In this anthology, he reflects on the architecture movements in the 1960s and declares their death by the early 1970s. The former was originally published by an important publisher of avant-garde art, Bijutsu Shuppansha, in 1971; it was later re-published in 1997 by noted publisher of architecture Kashima Shuppankai.<sup>346</sup> Isozaki's choice of the art publisher for the 1971 publication reflects the architect's original desire to reach out to artists as his audience, indicating his conscious position-taking in the avant-garde art community through his writings.

In *Kūkan e*, in addition to the poem “Fuka katei” (Incubation process)(1962), that accompanied the photomontage discussed earlier in this chapter and the essay, “Mienai toshi” (Invisible city)(1967), about his experience of flying over Los Angeles, also mentioned earlier, one more essay is worth analyzing: “Toshi Hakaigyō KK” (City Destruction Business, Inc.)(1962), is worth analyzing. In this essay, Isozaki argues that the city can function dynamically only when its disappearance can be fully imagined.<sup>347</sup> The essay originally appeared in the 1962 November issue of the journal *Shinkenchiku*, and in it he focused on the termination of the city, unveiling his hostile

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involved in the technocratic structure of making the expo, one of the largest national projects dealing with the city and urbanism in post-WWII Japan.

<sup>346</sup> As Isozaki himself acknowledged, the book was perceived more as a book of art when it was published for the first time, as indicated in the nature and purpose of Bijutsu Shuppansha. Kashima Shuppankai, a publishing arm of one of the largest construction companies in Japan, specializes in books on architecture and urbanism. When the book was republished, it was classified as a book on architecture and urbanism. That shift perhaps reflects changes (over a 25-year span) in the state and context of discourses in Japan on the city.

<sup>347</sup> Isozaki, “Toshi Hakaigyō” (City Destruction Business), *Kūkan e*, 8.

attitude regarding Tokyo as reflected in a series of conversations between the two main characters, both of whom serve as Isozaki's alter egos: Shin (whom Isozaki characterized as a cowardly Stalinist) and Arata (a naïve Trotskyite). Defining the city as a murderer, Shin feels an urgent mission to kill the city, wanting to make it systematic, and even turn the process into a business. Indeed, Shin's ambition is to make the business artistic and create an era when humanistic city-killing acts are carried over with pleasure. To his mind, Tokyo was sufficiently bursting with filthy ornaments and uncoordinated developments that it was about to collapse. Taking the city as an abstract concept, the main characters intend to kill the city physically, functionally, and visually, including its utopian future images. Only by imagining the complete termination of the city, Isozaki argues, can one move the city in a dynamic manner, as an abstract construct and a living organism, with the belief that the city's process, mechanism and channels, will survive after the termination.<sup>348</sup>

In the writing, he further contends that a real image exists only in a method (the latter of which he gives the utmost importance), and vice versa, emphasizing the importance of images and imagination in producing a method of design, as well as the impossibility of destroying an image. He lists the following three types of destruction: physical destruction, functional destruction, and destruction of an image, while nevertheless insisting on the impossibility of destroying images, citing as his examples the survival of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in imagery. He argues that the destruction of an image is possible only through amnesia, or the "discontinuance of a civilization."<sup>349</sup>

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<sup>348</sup> Isozaki, *Kūkan e*, 1-10.

<sup>349</sup> Further, Isozaki posits that the city is maintained within an intricately interwoven feedback mechanism that the citizens themselves have created, and that the mechanism would repair completely the functional destruction of the city. At the end of the essay, Isozaki concludes with his belief that only imagining a city's disappearance will enable it to move forward in a dynamic manner.

To Isozaki, imagining is a critical element in designing a city, in that it relates the task to ruins. In his essay, “Mirai toshi” (future city), Isozaki maintains that a future city includes ruins from the past, which are in part visible and tangible, and that contemporary cities are based on accumulations (of ruins) from the past. He suggests that in order to near an uncertain future we need to imagine a future city as an invisible organic construct and to draw its image. Isozaki compellingly embodied these arguments in the installation, *Electric Labyrinth*. By layering and collapsing images of city ruins and those of human remains in the revolving structure in flux, the installation *Electric Labyrinth* presents both invisible and visible images structured and constructed in the moving environment as a future city. To Isozaki, *Electric Labyrinth* represented a city, the space of which is “wrenched, in trans, and is a series of momentary incidents, and where light, sounds and various activities proceed.”<sup>350</sup> Like Isozaki’s city, *Electric Labyrinth* does not have clear contours, and it is like a “trembling shadow.”

Isozaki’s concept of process planning, as spelled out in his essay, “Process planning theory,” also connects his textual analysis to visuality. To Isozaki, a ruin meant not the end of architecture but rather the existence of reality itself, as a reminder of the “subjective” completeness of architecture that once existed. Isozaki argues that the process of completing past thoughts is completely identical to the process of imagining the future, taking a position that a future image would be the end image of an architecture one is now planning.<sup>351</sup> He declares that a future image, or the diversification of its possibility, would give us hope, but in the act of setting a future image, one would come to read an end into a particular architectural work one planned to bring into existence. He argues that by giving birth to architecture, one would also

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<sup>350</sup> Isozaki, “Mienai toshi” (Invisible City), *Kūkan e*, 380.

<sup>351</sup> Isozaki, “Purosesu puranningu ron” (Process planning theory), *Kūkan e*, 66.

determine an end to its life. Once produced and built, architecture is now given life as an organ. That organ will change and live, in relation to its internal activities.

## Conclusion

*Electric Labyrinth* represents the complexities, uncertainties and ambiguities of Isozaki's position in the 1960s as well as those characteristics applicable to the decade in general. Through his participation in the Milan Design Triennial in 1968 that was hijacked by students and young architects, Isozaki was forced to confront his dual positions, one in the anti-authoritarian avant-garde art movement, and the other in line with his position of authority, at a time of the radical dissolution of Modernist architecture, during a major shift in Japanese society in the late 1960s. It was in the low-budget and hand-made *Electric Labyrinth* that Isozaki revealed his attitude of anti-authoritarianism and iconoclasm. Through his experience with radical activism in Milan, he rationalized his active participation in the nationally operated mega-scale utopian World Expo 1970 as the designer for the expo's Festival Plaza. Taking collectivism as a strategy, Isozaki created *Electric Labyrinth* in a spirit of avant-garde art and anti-authoritarianism, but his form of collectivism was more directorial than collaborative.

In his installation for the Expo, Isozaki erected his own methodology for imagining and designing an archetype of the city, based on a time-place construct known as "*ma*," using a complex mix of visual materials, such as photographs, drawings and prints about life, death and space-in-between, which he juxtaposed freely. It was this mix of images (many of which were found images available in the visual economy in Japan (i.e., images from print media such as magazines and art books)) that Isozaki employed to great effect in the installation, which embodied his claims that the ruination of the city begins when it completes its renewal. In the

installation, a viewer walking through the installation could find the past and the future in the present moment and see an archetype of the city surrounded with images and sounds in a moving and responding structure. Additionally, the elements of his writings and his unbuilt designs from the 1960s accumulated to become part of *Electric Labyrinth*. The writings and unbuilt designs, together with the installation, revealed his complex and nuanced concepts about the city and his position that a city is an image-based abstract construct.

One area that merits further exploration, but is beyond the scope of the dissertation, is a theoretical investigation of the body of a viewer in relation to the installation, at the moment of the development of new media art in Japan. By walking through the installation, one's body is engulfed in a cascade of images, and there the body itself becomes an image among other images, a phenomenon that Henri Bergson would call a "center of indetermination within an acentered universe."<sup>352</sup> There, under his theory, the body serves as "a filter creatively selecting facets of images from the universal flux according to its own capacities."<sup>353</sup> In the installation, the body itself becomes "an assemblage of images" in a Deleuzian sense. I argue that *Electric Labyrinth*, which allows the body to function in that way, is an aesthetic project and a precursor to technology-driven new media art, where the entire body is the subject of art, in an environment saturated with images and sounds.

Gilles Deleuze's notion of a movement-image based on the cut and montage is also applicable to the environment created in *Electric Labyrinth*. The myriad of image patterns generated, based on an algorithm-like simple motor-base system, was constantly shifting, responding to the movement of the body. In a Deleuzian sense, *Electric Labyrinth* offers "a site for studying perception, representation, space, time,

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<sup>352</sup> Mark B.N. Hansen, *New Philosophy for New Media* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2004), 3.

<sup>353</sup> Ibid.

and memory.”<sup>354</sup> It constituted a site for expressing the shifting relationship of the visible and the invisible, of the movement and the body, and of the past and the future in a present moment, thus enabling its creator and his audience to investigate an archetype of the city.

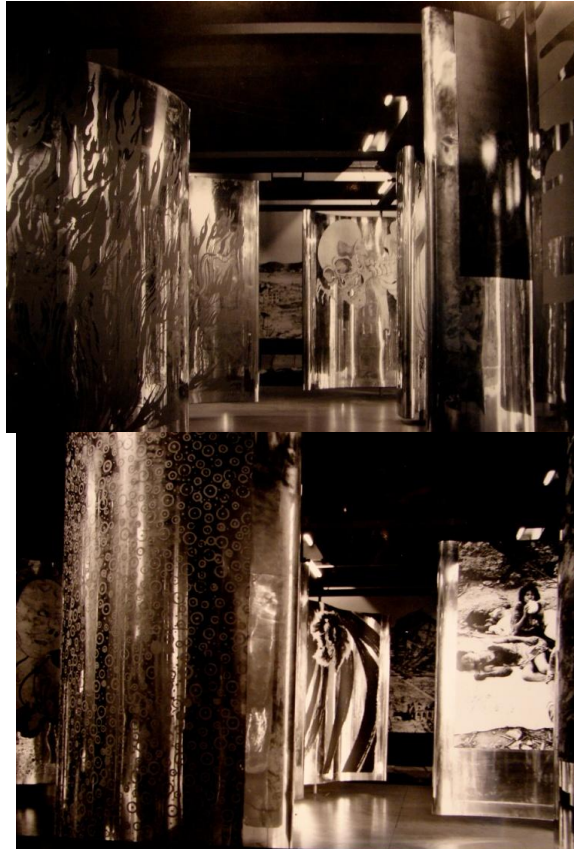
Recently developed scholarship in the intersection between new media art and architecture, as seen in Felicity D. Scott’s *Architecture or Technotopia: Politics after Modernism*, and Maria Fernandez’s “‘Life-like’: Historicizing Process and Responsiveness in Digital Art” would provide me with a foundation and direction to theoretically pursue the installation *Electric Labyrinth*, not only in the postwar Japanese art context but also as part of an alternative genealogy of the postmodern turn in architecture in the late 1960s, where I will focus on a set of experimental practice and polemics where multiple artistic disciplines merged and new media art developed.<sup>355</sup>

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<sup>354</sup> Tim Lenoir, “Heptic Vision: Computation, Media, and Embodiment in Mark Hansen’s New Phenomenology” in *New Philosophy for New Media*, xix.

<sup>355</sup> See Felicity D. Scott, *Architecture or Techno-topia: Politics after Modernism* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2007), and Maria Fernandez’s “‘Life-like’: Historicizing Process and Responsiveness in Digital Art,” in *The Art of Art History: A Critical Anthology*, ed. Donald Preziosi (New York: Oxford UP, 2009), 468.

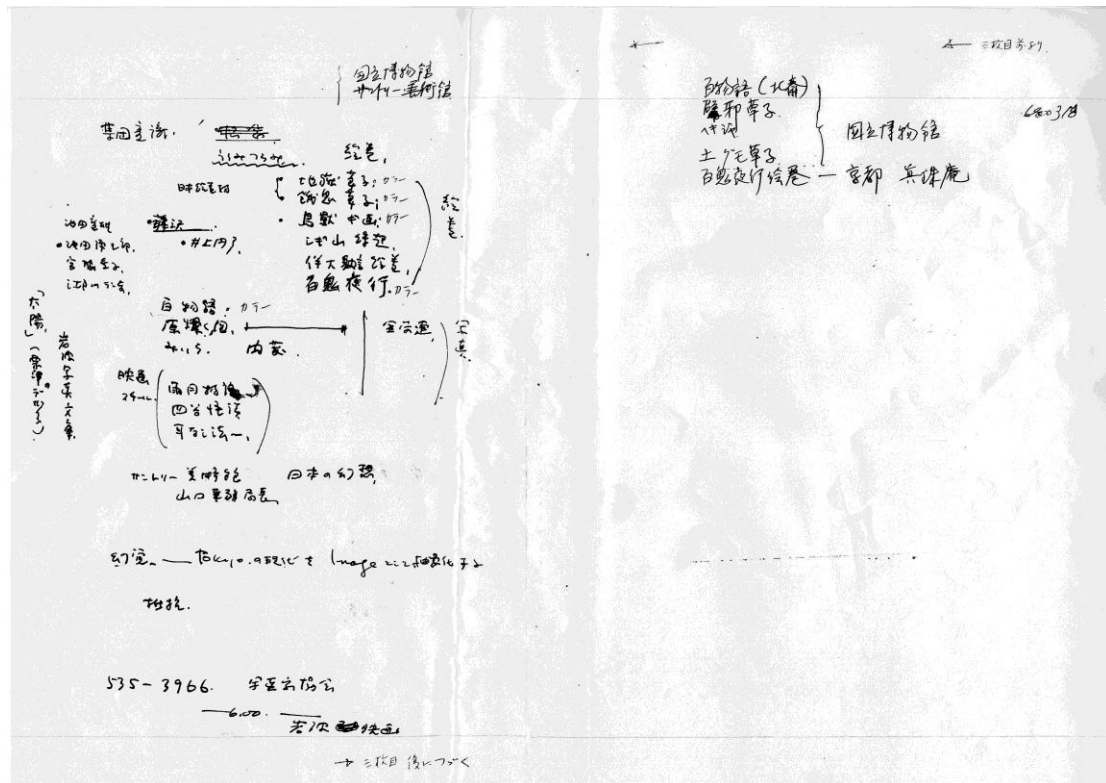
Figure. 3.1



Installation photographs of *Electric Labyrinth* (1968)

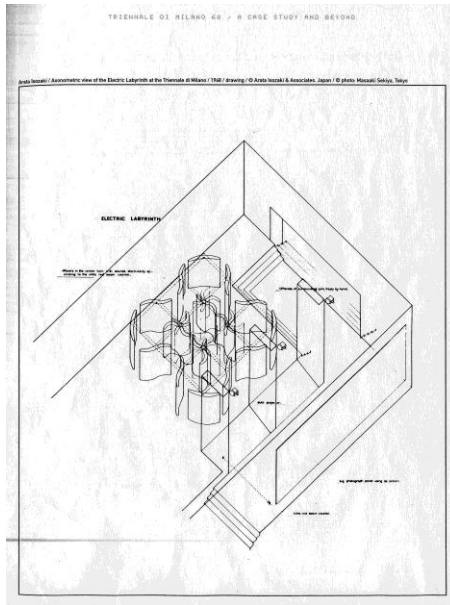


Figure. 3.2



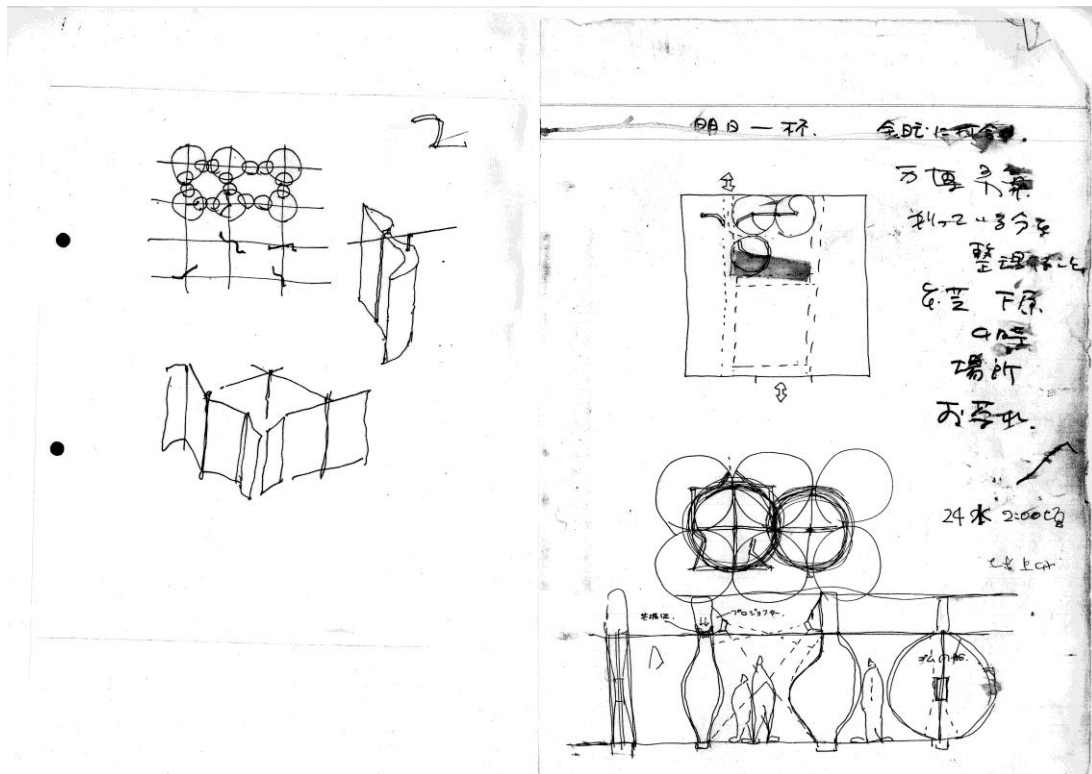
Isozaki Arata's concept memo for the making of *Electric Labyrinth*, c. 1968

Figure. 3.3



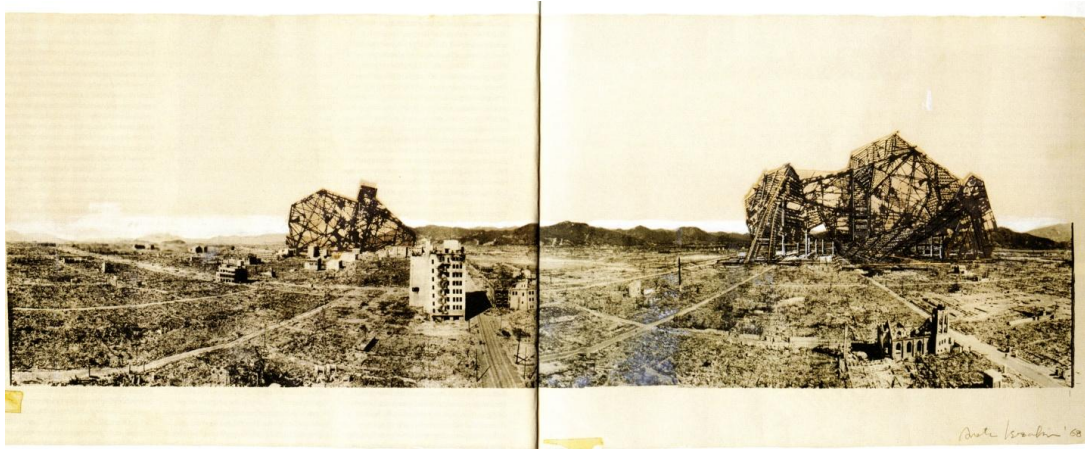
*Electric Labyrinth* (1968) Isometric View

Figure. 3.4



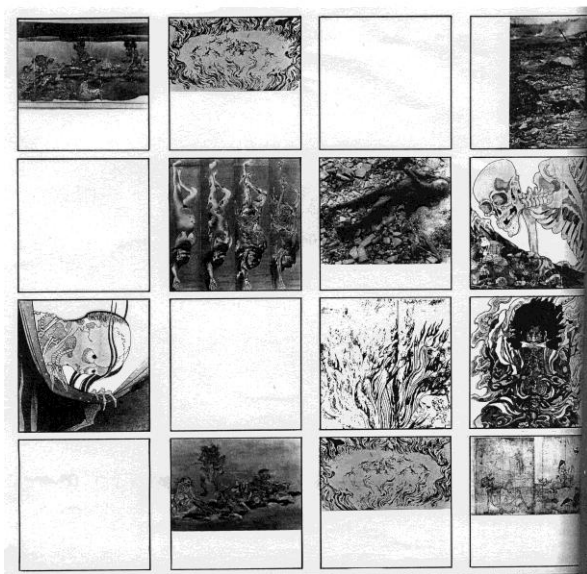
Isozaki Arata's conceptual drawing of *Electric Labyrinth*, 1968

Figure. 3.5



Photomontage "Hiroshima became ruins again" c. 1968  
Isozaki Arata

Figure 3.6



### Images in *Electric Labyrinth*

Figure. 3.7



Isozaki Arata in production of *Electric Labyrinth* in Milan, Italy  
1968

Figure. 3.8



Image projections on the photomontage “Hiroshima became ruins again”  
in *Electric Labyrinth*, reconstructed in 2002



Figure. 3.9



Photographs of the Milan Design Triennial in 1968 and its takeover taken by Isozaki Arata in 1968

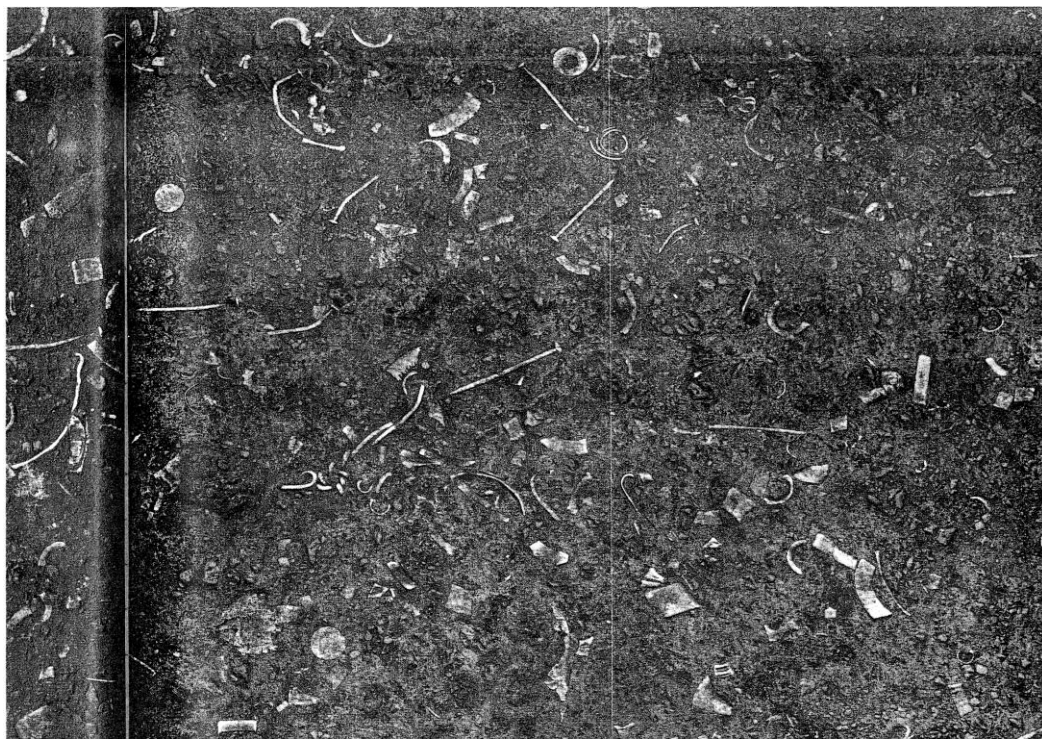


Figure. 3.10



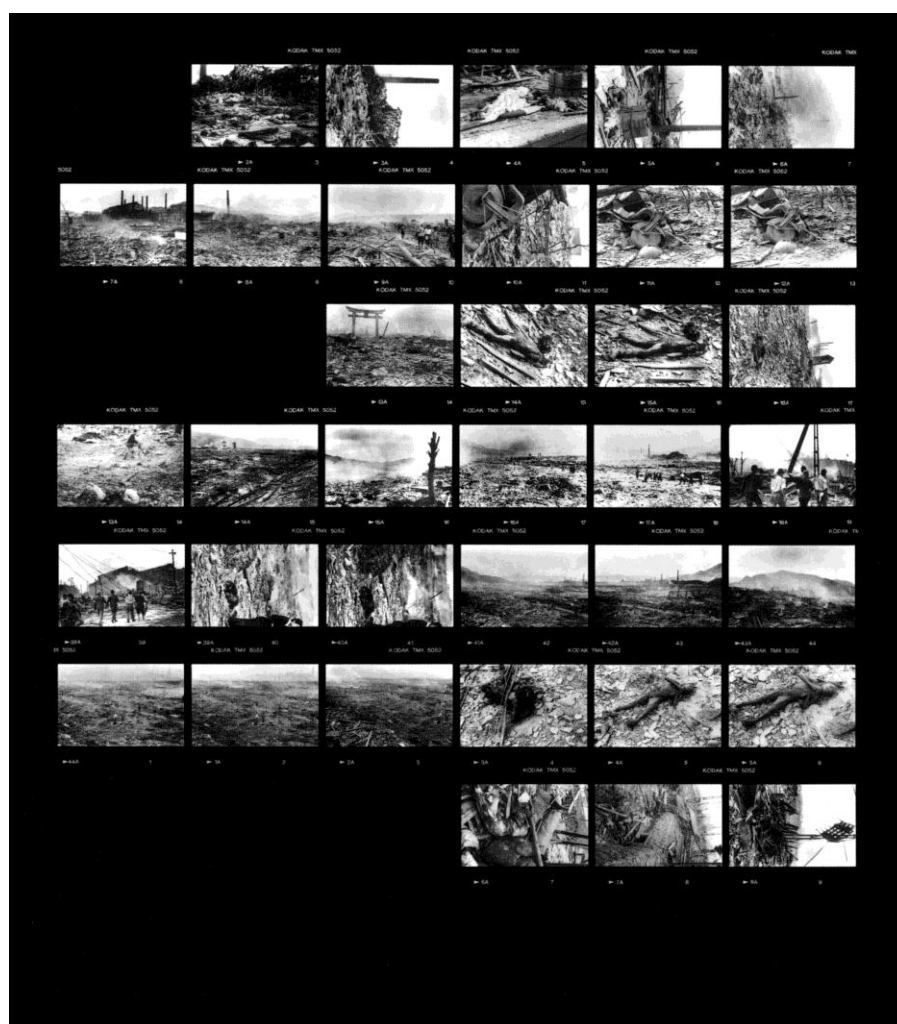
Photographs by Tomatsu Shomei from his Nagasaki series in 1962-3

Figure. 3.11



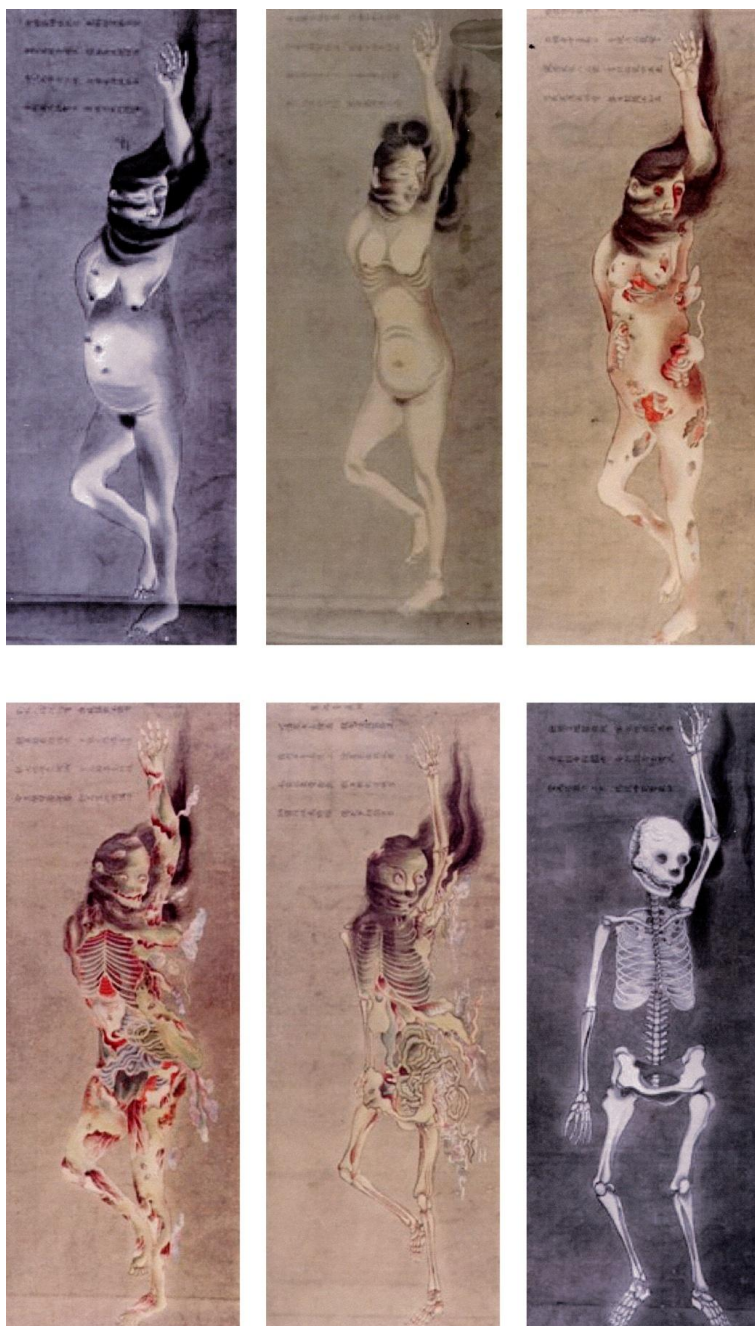
Photograph “Untitled” by Tōmatsu Shōmei from the series “Asphalt,” c. 1960

Figure. 3.12



Contact Sheet Images by Yamahata Yosuke photographed in Nagasaki, Japan on August 10, 1945

Figure. 3.13



“Six phases of metamorphoses (Ono no Komachi)”

Figure. 3.14



“Soma no furudairi” by Utagawa Kuniyoshi, late 19<sup>th</sup> century

Figure. 3.15



Naosuke Gonbei (right) and Kyuzo Shinsuke (left) from the series “*Eimei nijyu-hachi shu-ku*” Late 19<sup>th</sup> century



Figure. 3.16



Isozaki's pen drawing based on the print titled Kyuzo Shinsuke from the series "*Eimei nijyu-hachi shu-ku*"

Figure. 3.17



Drawings from the series “Jigoku Shoki” (hell grass paper)



Figure. 3.18



Sansei Hokoku, an image from his “Tokaido Yotsuya kaidan” series

Figure. 3.19



war\_1111



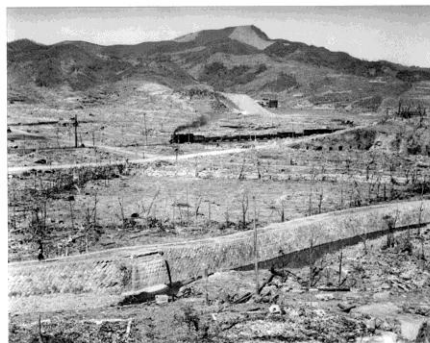
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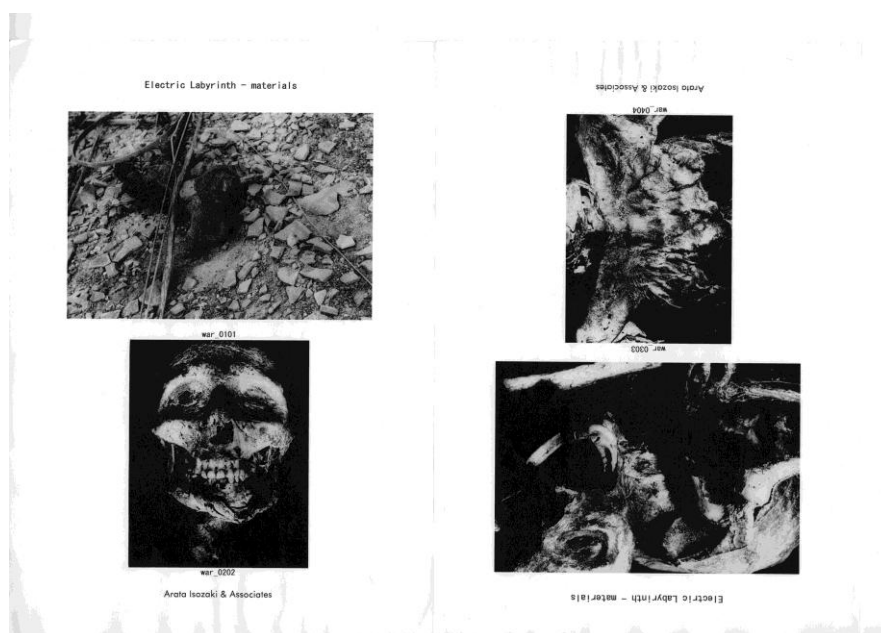
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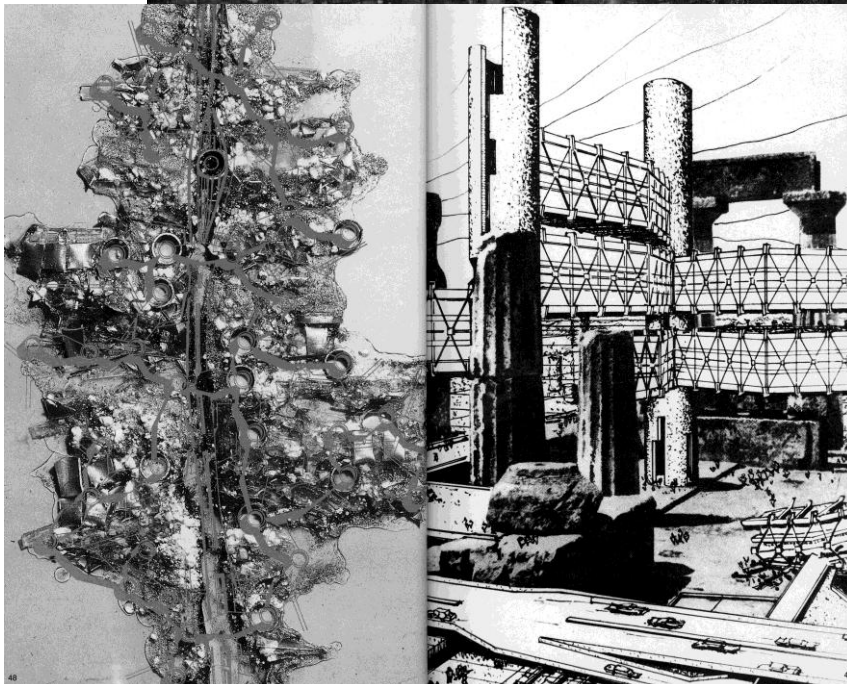
Photographs taken in Nagasaki on August 10<sup>th</sup>, 1945 by Yamahata Yoji

Figure. 3.20



Photographs of mummies and burnt bodies used in *Electric Labyrinth* (1968)

Figure. 3.21.



Isozaki's section titled *Fuka katei* (Hatching process) from the April 1962 special issue of the art journal *bijutsu techo* titled "gendai no image"

Figure. 3.22



A photograph of a destroyed building's frame found in Isozaki's image scrap book  
c. 1945

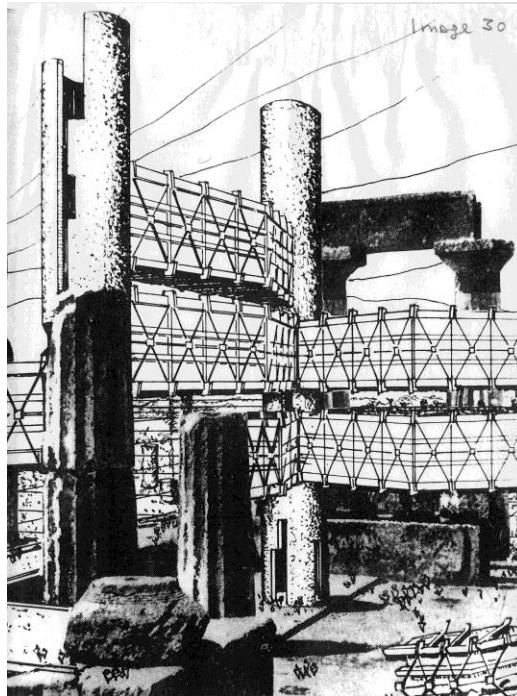
Figure. 3.24.



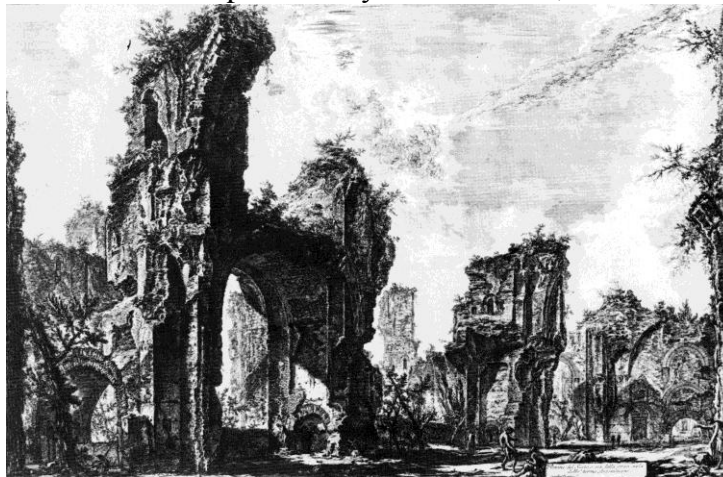
Isozaki's performance "Joint Core System," reconstructed at the Art Tower Mito as part of its exhibition *Nihon no Gejitsu 1960s*



Figure. 3.25

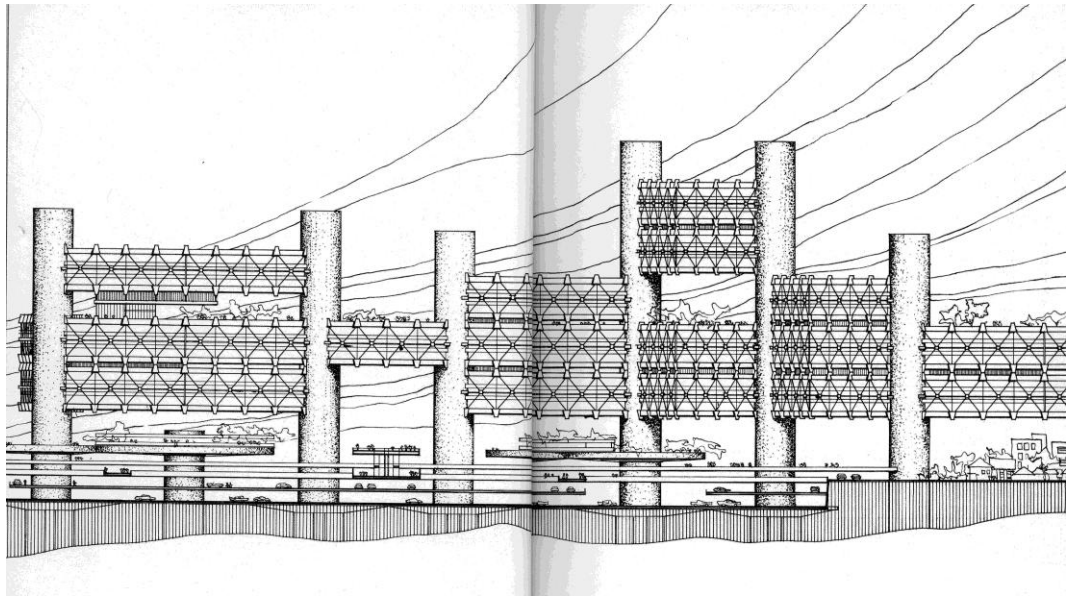


“Incubation process” by Isozaki Arata, c. 1962



Giovanni Battista Piranesi's drawings of the Roman ruins c. 1750

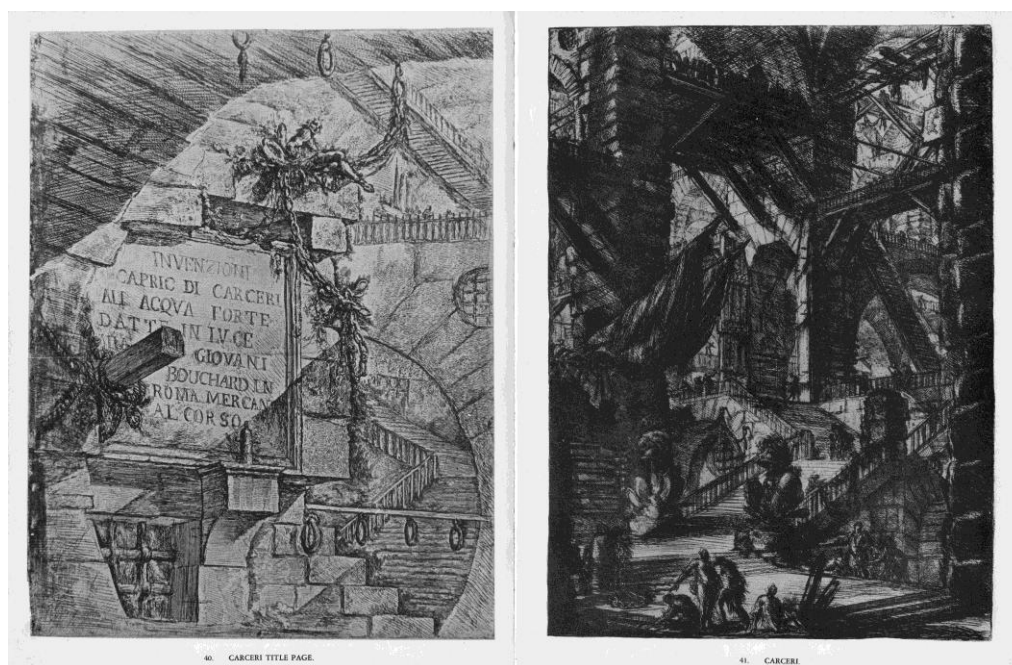
Figure. 3.26



“Shinjuku Project” drawing, 1962  
Isozaki Arata

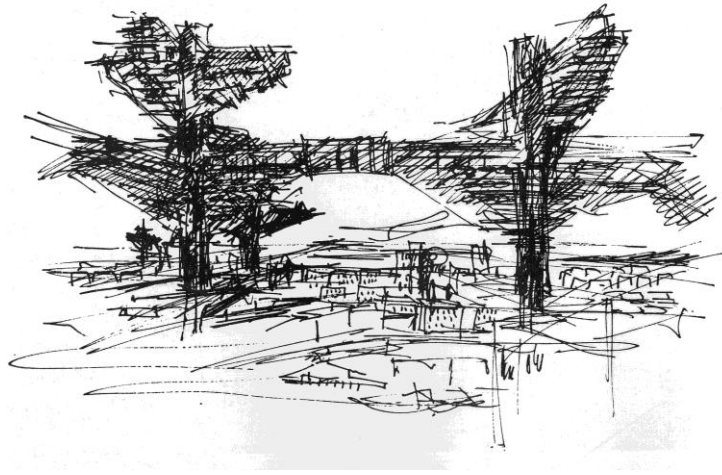


Figure. 3.27



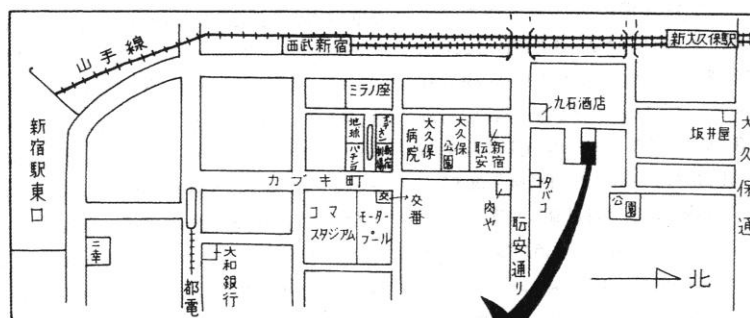
Piranesi, Giovanni Battista "Carceri d'invenzione" c. 1750

Figure. 3.28



“Cities in the Air” (c. 1962)  
Isozaki Arata

Figure. 3.29



新宿区百人町2-49

—(革命芸術家のホワイトハウス)—

**新宿.吉村アトリ**  
**1960.7.1-10** 午後0時 - 午前0時

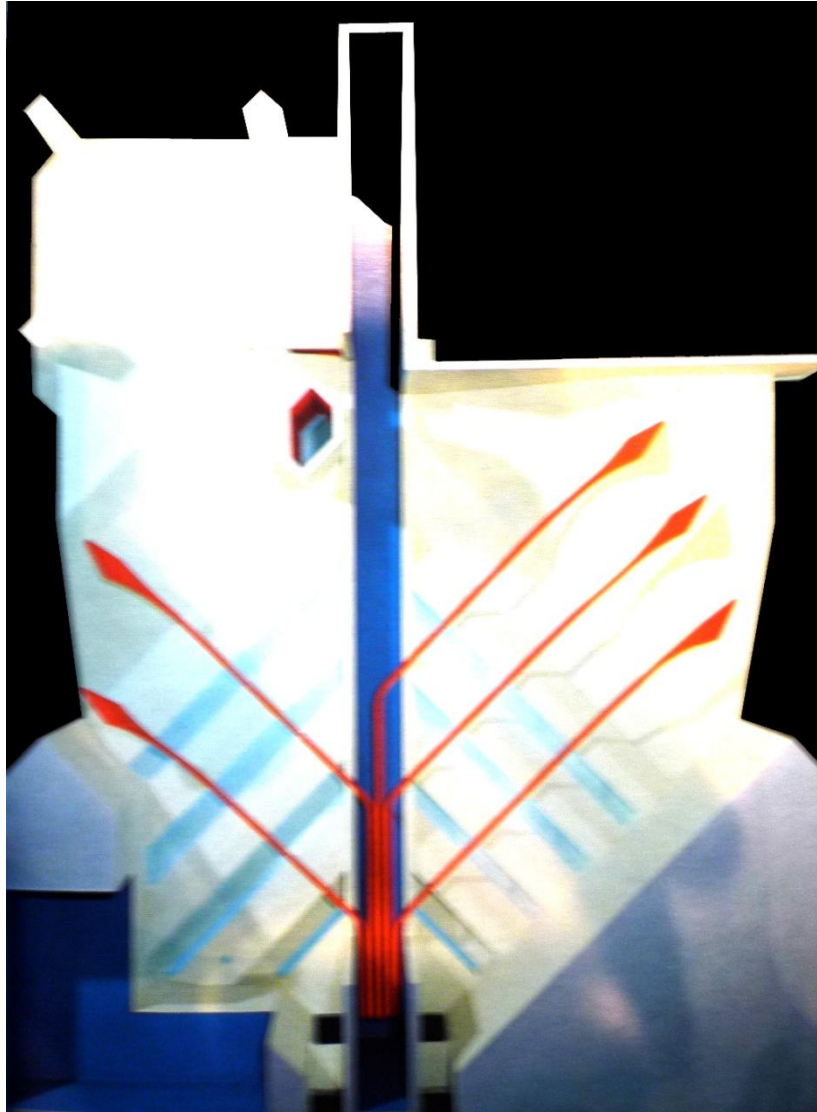
Yoshimura Masanobu's atelier 'White House' happening invitation for the event on  
 July 1 - 10, 1960

Figure. 3.30



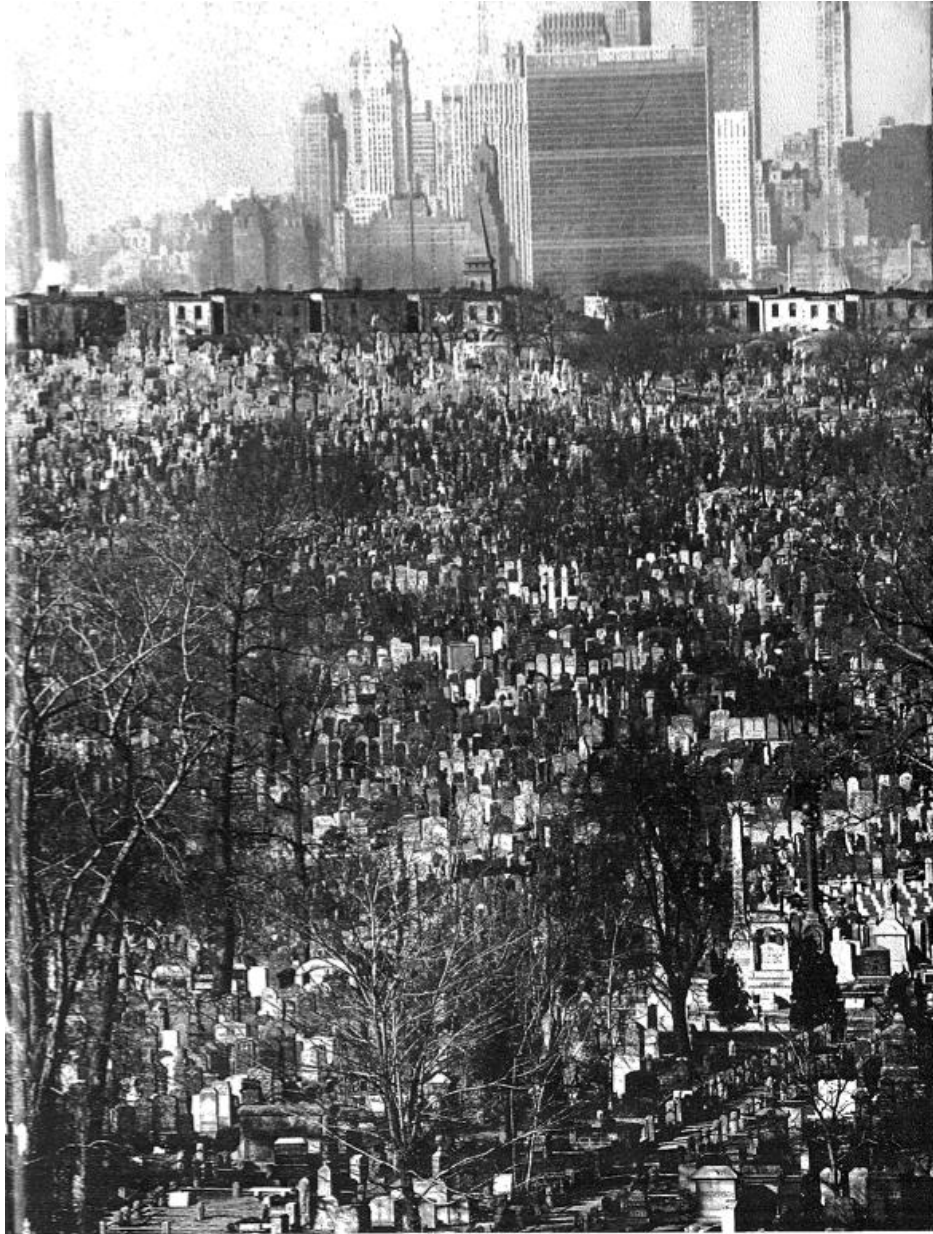
Installation photographs of the exhibition *From Space to Environment* (1966)

Figure. 3.31



Architectural model by Isozaki Arata exhibited in the exhibition *From Space to Environment* (1966)

Figure 3.32



“Jewish Cemetery in Queens, New York” by Andreas Fininger from *This is New York* (1944)



Figure. 3.34



Los Angeles aerial photography by Futagawa Yukio, c. 196\_

## Chapter 4

### The Symbol Zone Complex of the Japan Expo 1970: Architecture, Visual Representation, and Modernity

#### Introduction

The final chapter in the dissertation focuses on the Symbol Zone building complex of the Japan World Expo '70 (Expo '70 or simply "the Expo") (Figure 4.1). The largest national project commissioned by the Japanese state after World War II, at least in terms of its budget, the expo was held in Osaka and funded jointly by the Japanese government, the Osaka prefectural government, and private industry. The Symbol Zone (the "Zone") itself relates to the subject of Chapter 3, Isozaki Arata's 1968 installation, "Electric Labyrinth." Created for the occasion of the Milan Design Triennial in 1968, at the height of resistance movements protesting the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty, in particular, and political and cultural hegemony, in general, it served as an artistic precursor, as well as an ideological antithesis, to the Festival Plaza (*omatsuri hiroba*),<sup>356</sup> that comprised the core of the zone. The Plaza took on the installation's performative, cybernetic, and responsive functions in Expo '70, at a time when the nation was experiencing radical and fundamental societal, technological and economic changes. As a result of the changes, the major political and intellectual failures that placed in question the widespread principles of Modernist architecture.<sup>357</sup>

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<sup>356</sup> Isozaki discusses in depth the naming of the Festival Plaza in *Japan-ness in Architecture*. It was named by Nishiyama Uzō (1911-1994), an architecture professor at Kyoto University. Arata Isozaki, *Japan-ness in Architecture*, trans. Sabu Kohso (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2006), 70-71.

<sup>357</sup> A series of shifts in Japan during the sixties in effect brought about the apathy of political movements and the reiteration of the status quo, except for a few then marginal movements, such as feminism, local environmentalism, etc.



The Symbol Zone as a whole presented a utopian model of the city. Involving many of the visual practitioners discussed in the previous chapters of the dissertation, it encompassed multiple built structures as well as a wide range of critical issues, such as tradition, modernity, technology, and the notion of time and space. The totality of the Zone signifies the complexities and nuances of the various issues with which I have dealt in the dissertation. The Zone is also related to the impact of printed visual materials on artists and architects imagining a cityscape in postwar Japan up to 1970. Here, too, photography played an important dual role: one as a source to invoke an artist's or architect's imagination; and the other to represent and project the built environments in a different light, which in turn becomes a source of further imaginings of the city.

In the immediate postwar years, architects and artists desired to rebuild devastated cities by filling in the gap between their imagined cities and what still remained in the rubble. The Expo presented itself as a city model, based on a master plan developed by Tange Kenzō. In particular, by positioning the plaza as the “Heart of the City,” a concept that was thoroughly discussed as a physical requirement of cities at the Eighth International Congress of Modern Architecture in 1951, many of the architects and artists involved hoped the Expo would be close to what they had imagined as the city of the future, but in reality they found it not to be the case.

Some found it only temporal and ephemeral, while others saw it either as a form of commercial propaganda for the nation, comparing it to Japan's efforts in World War II, or as a stimulator for its citizens' social amnesia of the recent past. Some hoped that it would be an avant-garde artistic project; others saw it as a final project to complete the goal of Japan's modernization. Having cost approximately one trillion yen, the Expo attracted 64,210,000 visitors for its six-month run, but it soon became a ruin (and a technological ruin left with pavilions and facilities equipped with

the highest technologies at that time); a majority of the built environments were demolished not long after the Expo's closure in September, 1970.

In this chapter, I will examine both the photographs that inspired the creators of the zone, and the photographs of the zone itself, expressed as the artists' and architects' positions on the Expo. My argument will focus on major components of the zone, such as the Festival Plaza (designed by Isozaki Arata), the "Tower of the Sun" (designed by Okamoto Tarō), and the Space Frame (designed by Tange Kenzō and Kamiya Kōji), that were designed as a culmination, to varying degrees, of their creators' desires to utilize technology, define modernity, and imagine the city. I posit that the designers' visions were realized—again to different degrees—through the intervention of photography, as a result of the fact that the time during Expo '70 marked a peak in the economy of producing imagery, such as photography and moving images, using the vast number of apparatuses made available. The economy and available technologies enabled artists and photographers to artistically respond to the Expo, which generated multiple temporalities and thereby often subverted pre-existing notions of time and space.

Overall, despite the Expo's seemingly triumphant and utopian atmosphere and general perception, the Festival Plaza, together with the "Tower of the Sun," represented Isozaki's and Okamoto's challenge to the notion of linear history, as assumed in the Expo under its theme, "Progress and Harmony for Mankind," and epitomized by the geometry-based Space Frame structure realized by Tange and Kamiya. The plaza and the tower arguably constituted their (separate) appeals to Japan to seek out its own "avant-garde" position and ultimately "Japan-ness," in art and politics. Isozaki, Okamoto and other critics have positioned the Expo as the end of Japan's privileging, since the end of the Edo period, of Western values, specifically those originating in the Enlightenment. As such, the Expo constituted for them a

rupture for locating the subjectivity of the self in the postwar era. Through designing various parts of the Symbol Zone, these artists used this project to challenge both the notion of “modernity” adopted from the West and that of “tradition” invented by theorists and the cultural elite (such as Tange) in postwar Japan. In this connection, because of its democratic nature that freely allows for reproduction and juxtaposition, photography played a critical role for Okamoto, Tange, Isozaki, and others who were deciphering, imagining, and conceptualizing their projects for or about the Symbol Zone of Expo ’70.

To support the above argument, I will examine the following sets of photographs: (1) Okamoto Tarō’s snapshots from his 1967 trip to Mexico, Guatemala and Brazil, compared to his conceptual drawings for the tower, which he created during the trip; and (2) the commissioned photographs of a model of Deme, one of the two robots designed by Isozaki for the plaza. (In the conclusion chapter, Chapter 5, I will examine photo-based works created as a criticism of the Expo; these include Tōmatsu Shōmei’s photographs of the Zone, which appeared in the journal *Ken*, in comparison with the images of the Symbol Plaza that appeared in the Expo’s official architectural photography publication *Structure Space Mankind Expo ’70*, among others.) In this chapter, I will also compare the two photographic exhibitions in the thematic pavilion. The first exhibition is titled “The Wall of Contradictions,” while the other one, curated by Okamoto, is entitled “The Anonymous People Who Support the World.” Okamoto’s exhibition will further be compared to group exhibitions of black and white photographs with a similar thematic composition: *The Family of Man* (1955) at The Museum of Modern Art, and *The Camera as Witness* (1967) organized for the 1967 Universal and International Exhibition (more commonly known as “Expo 67” or the “Montreal Expo”).

Among the photographs, those of the robot Deme and a majority of Okamoto's snapshots from his 1967 trip remain unpublished today. I came across the photographs of Deme in Isozaki's archive during research I conducted in 2008. The fact that Isozaki commissioned the artist Ōtsuji Kiyoji (1923-2001) to photograph Deme signifies the following two things: Isozaki's use of photography as a conceptual tool, and his belonging to a web of avant-garde artists who were interested in technology. As for Okamoto's snapshots from his 1967 trip, I located them in his archive at the Okamoto Tarō Museum in Kawasaki, Japan during a research trip in May 2009.

### **The Symbol Zone**

The Expo's Symbol Zone (Figure 4.2), designed by Tange, was the core of the structure of the entire Expo, as signified by the creation of a plaza in the zone. Tange viewed the zone, which covered an area 1,000 meters long and 150 meters wide, running north and south to form the main trunk of the entire compound, as a testing ground of his new Structuralist perspective. In 1971 he wrote of the experience of designing for the Expo as follows: "The interpretation of architecture must go beyond the functional to deal with more general concepts. Gradually inner and outer functions, private and social spaces, human scale and mass-human scale, began to play parts in our methodologies of design."<sup>358</sup>

At the zone's northernmost end still currently stand the Expo Art Museum and EXPO Hall, and arranged from there to the southern extremity of the site were an artificial pond, the Festival Plaza, the theme pavilion called the "Tower of the Sun," a Main Gate, International Bazaar, EXPO Association Headquarters, and EXPO Tower.

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<sup>358</sup> Tange Kenzō, "Towards Urban Design," *The Japan Architect* 46 (September 1971), 19; quoted in Botond Bogner, *Contemporary Japanese Architecture: Its Development and Culture* (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold Company, 1985), 109.

In this chapter, I will focus on the core of the zone, which was covered by the Space Frame and consisted of the Festival Plaza and the “Tower of the Sun”.

The Expo’s main thematic pavilion, the “Tower of the Sun” (*Taiyō no tō*) (Figure 4.3) was conceptualized by Okamoto Tarō and included various exhibitions at its three levels (i.e., the basement level, the ground level, and the level suspended from the frame). The tower was conceived as a shell structure of steel and steel concrete, with a height of sixty-eight meters (plus four meters for a lightning rod) and an interior space of 1306 square meters.<sup>359</sup> The tower was fronted by Okamoto’s two lower and smaller sculptural towers: the “Tower of Motherhood” and the “Tower of Youth” (Figure 4.4). Behind the “Tower of the Sun” was the Festival Plaza, a cybernetic performance space designed by Isozaki Arata, which hosted daily a variety of events and performances. The megastructure Space Frame covered both the towers and the plaza, and was designed by architects Kamiya Kōji and Tange Kenzō.

The design of the Symbol Zone took a high degree of coordination and collaboration among the designers and artists, and was based on a master plan drawn by Tange (Figure 4.5). In particular, the twenty-five-meter-long wings of the tower were connected to part of the frame, and this feature required highly sophisticated technological and structural coordination. For example, the gravity imposed on the arms had to be calculated to ensure a smooth connection to the space frame.<sup>360</sup> On the other hand, a heightened sense of conflict emerged among Tange, Okamoto, and Isozaki, in relation to certain aspects of the design and ideology of the zone. As discussed later in this chapter, this conflict arose with respect to their individual interpretations of what comprised a “modern space” suitable for Japan in 1970.

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<sup>359</sup> Kamiya Kōji, “The Space Frame,” special edition of the Japan World Expo ‘70, *The Japan Architect*, 164 (May-June 1970): 49.

<sup>360</sup> *Ibid.*, 51.

Okamoto Tarō (1911-96), as discussed in Chapter 1, was among the most prominent and popular artists in postwar Japan; in September 1967, he was officially appointed the artistic director for the Expo's thematic tower pavilion. Okamoto had moved to Paris in 1929 with his parents, who belonged to the celebrated Japanese cultural elite. His mother Kanoko was a well-regarded progressive poet and novelist in the Taishō and early Shōwa eras, contributing *tanka* poetry and prose fiction to important literary journals like *Myōjō*, *Subaru* and *Bungakukai*. Later in life, she devoted herself to research on Buddhism.<sup>361</sup> Tarō's father Ippei was a popular cartoonist for *Asahi shinbun*, one of the three major dailies, and he also enjoyed modest success as a novelist and lyricist.<sup>362</sup> In Paris, Okamoto was trained in ethnology by Marcel Mauss (1872-1950) at the Sorbonne, attended the College de Sociologie Sacre organized by George Bataille, and was befriended by Surrealists such as Andre Breton, Kurt Seligmann, and Man Ray before his return to Japan in 1940.<sup>363</sup> He had also met a wide range of artists whose influence informed his work, including Hans Arp and Le Corbusier. His interest in photography, combined with his scholarly training in ethnology, was developed through his friendship with photographers such as Robert Capa (1913-54) and Brassai (1899-1984), the latter of whom shot night scenes in the streets of Paris and later produced/compiled the book *Paris de nuit* (1933).<sup>364</sup> Okamoto accompanied Brassai in photographing the city at night, and, in

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<sup>361</sup> Sugisaki, Kazuko, "A Writer's Life: A Biological Sketch," in *Kanoko Okamoto: "The House Spirit" and Other Stories*, trans. Kazuko Sugisaki (Santa Barbara, CA: Capra Press, 1995), 7-30.

<sup>362</sup> Yumoto Gōichi, "Ippei no shōgai (The Life of Ippei)," in *Gendai manga no paionia botsugo 50-nen Okamoto Ippei ten* (Exhibition of Okamoto Ippei: A Pioneer of Contemporary Manga, Fifty Years after His Death), ed. Suzuki Isamu, et al. (Kawasaki: Kawasaki City Museum of Art, 1997), 9-11.

<sup>363</sup> Wikipedia contributors, "Tarō Okamoto," *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*, <[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tarō\\_Okamoto](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tarō_Okamoto)> (accessed 15 July 2009).

<sup>364</sup> Okamoto Tarō, "Zuihitsu Furansu de shiriatta shashinkatachi" (An Essay: The Photographers I Came to Know in France), *Asahi kamera*, January 1954; reprinted in

turn, the French photographer sold him an old condenser enlarger, which enabled him to pursue printing.<sup>365</sup> In interwar Paris, where avant-garde art practices such as Dada, Constructivism and Surrealism were maturing, Okamoto was a member of the leftist community of avant-garde international artists, who often brought together diametrically opposed views and utilized an artistic style of abstraction to various degrees. Photography served for him as a direct extension of his body and eyes, and he aimed to create images that fully took advantage of the pragmatic and accidental nature of the camera as an automatic apparatus.<sup>366</sup>

Tange Kenzō, whose biography was fully discussed in Chapter 1, and Kamiya Kōji, a student of Tange at his laboratory of architecture and urbanism at the University of Tokyo, and later a staff architect in Tange's design office, worked together to design the Space Frame. Kamiya was also a part of the Tange team for the 1960 Tokyo Plan, discussed in Chapter 2. Tange, as the designer of the master plan for the Expo, farmed out detailed designs of the Expo, including numerous pavilions, to his former students and employees, including Isozaki Arata and Kurokawa Kishō. In addition, many of the Metabolist architects, discussed in Chapter 3, were given an opportunity to realize their long-held visions at the Expo, supported by the technology and capital supplied by the Japanese government and private industries.

The direct involvement of Okamoto and Tange at the zone presented a juxtaposition that symbolized the recurring debate on tradition vs. modernity (*dentō ronsō*) that had been under discussion since the early 1950s, as fully discussed in

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*Shashinten Okamoto Tarō no shisen* (Photography Exhibition: Through the Eyes of Okamoto Tarō), ed. Mitsui Keiji and Fujimura Satomi (Tokyo: The Tokyo Metropolitan Museum of Photography, 2005), 16.

<sup>365</sup> Ibid.

<sup>366</sup> Kusumoto Aki, "Shashinka Okamoto Tarō wa sonzai suronoka" (Does Photographer Okamoto Tarō Exist?), *Shashinten Okamoto Tarō no shisen* (Photography Exhibition: Through the Eyes of Okamoto Tarō) (Tokyo: Tokyo Metropolitan Museum of Photography, 2005), 110-11.

Chapter 1 (Figure 4.6). There, the “Tower of the Sun,” with its resemblance to prehistoric figurines that represented Jōmon/Dionysian/lower-class aesthetics, punctuated the geometry-based Space Frame that represented Yayoi/Apollonian/aristocratic aesthetics.<sup>367</sup>

The contrast of the tower and the frame crystallized the designers’ different approaches regarding the sources they chose to represent modernity: prehistoric Jōmon culture, interpreted by Okamoto as a discontinued “rupture,” and the likewise prehistoric but more sophisticated Yayoi culture favored by Tange (Figure 4.7). This Jōmon-Yayoi dichotomy epitomizes the artists’ competing interpretations of the artistic and cultural history of Japan, and of the inspirations for postwar Japanese art. As discussed in Chapter 1, Tange found a vital source for modern Japanese art and architecture in the synthesis of the prehistoric Jōmon and Yayoi cultures, arguing for the continuity of Japanese artistic history, while Okamoto found it in the Jōmon era, characterizing it initially as a discontinued rupture in history, and later as an “explosion” that transcended dialectical analysis.<sup>368</sup> Okamoto utilized this historiographical approach, which he termed “the life source for the ethnic (*minzoku*),” as part of his strategy for the Expo’s thematic pavilion.<sup>369</sup>

### **Background of Expo ‘70**

1970 was still under the heavy influence of developments that occurred during the sixties, when a large shift occurred in Japanese society, which Isozaki called “a missing page in history” (*rekishi no rakuchō*) that marked the end of a twenty-year

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<sup>367</sup> Isozaki Arata, *Japan-ness in Architecture*, 40.

<sup>368</sup> *Ibid.*, 41.

<sup>369</sup> Okamoto Tarō, *Nihon no dentō* (Traditions of Japan) (1956); reprint (Tokyo: Kōbunsha, 2005), 73-111.



period after the end of the war.<sup>370</sup> 1970 witnessed another round of student protests, though suppressed by the government, against a wide range of events including the on-going Anpo struggle through which students contested Japan's renewal of the earlier Security Treaty, and the continued involvement of the U.S. in Vietnam. (The latter had in part contributed to Japan's booming economy while a loss of politicality was marked during the 1960s.) These political, social and economic phenomena created an undertone to the Expo, and were manifested visually in the artistic and intellectual tensions and confluences brought to the Symbol Zone by each of its creators.

Immediately after the success of the Tokyo Olympics in 1964, the Japanese government and business community planned to organize a world exposition, located for the first time ever in Asia, to demonstrate the recovery and further growth of postwar Japan. Previously, Japan had planned to hold a world expo in 1940 (year 2600 in the Japanese calendar), in conjunction that same year with a then-proposed Tokyo Olympics, to display the nation's prosperity.<sup>371</sup> In the sixties, the country's annual economic growth rate exceeded ten percent under the government's policy of aggressive economic and industrial development and liberalization of trade. With the fresh memory of its defeat in World War II, and partially due to large export demands from the United States and South Korea, in relation first to the Korean War (1950-53), and later to the Vietnam War (1955-75), Japan achieved "miraculous" economic

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<sup>370</sup> Isozaki Arata, "Introduction to the New Edition," *Kenchiku no kaitai* (The Dismantling of Architecture) (Tokyo: Bijutsu Shuppansha, 1975); republished (Tokyo: Kashima Shuppankai, 1997), v.

<sup>371</sup> Sawaragi Noi, *Sensō to banpaku* (World Wars and World Fairs) (Tokyo: Bijutsu Shuppansha, 2005), 146.

growth. Indeed, the 1956 Japanese Economic White Paper stated that Japan's postwar recovery efforts had come to an end.<sup>372</sup>

During the national push in the 1960s for high economic growth, Japanese society speedily accumulated capital, and it accordingly was filled with material goods and visual materials, as manifested in the nation's booming media culture, both printed and moving media. With the active production of commercial films and the increasing number of households that owned television sets, everyday life was flooded with images. For example, television broadcasting began in Japan in 1953, but because of the enormous cost of television receivers, televisions were at first displayed in public spaces (e.g., department stores and railroad stations) and became popular among individual consumers only from the late fifties. Due to the erection of Tokyo Tower as a television tower in 1958, the number of television programs increased and black-and-white television sets became popular among consumers; color television sets were heavily marketed beginning in the early sixties.<sup>373</sup> Around then, among many other things, the utterly shocking scene of the assassination of Asanuma Inejirō (1898-1960), the head of Japan's Socialist Party, was televised live nationwide, thus viscerally reminding the general public of the media's visual effectiveness.<sup>374</sup> In addition, many of the 1960 Anpo protests were also televised.

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<sup>372</sup> Takasaki Tatsunosuke, "Keizai hakusho happyō ni saishite no keizai kikakuchō choukan seimei" (A Statement by the Minister of the Economic Agency of Japan in Presenting the Economic White Paper), *Shōwa 31 nendo nenji keizai hōkoku* (Economic report of the year 1956). (Tokyo: Economic Planning Agency of Japan. 17 July 1956): unpaginated; reprinted in *Fukukoku keizai hakusho*, v. 7, Shōwa 31 (Reprinted Economic White Paper, v. 7, 1956) (Tokyo: Nihon Keizai Hyōronsha, 1976), unpaginated.

<sup>373</sup> Wikipedia contributors, "Gaitō Terebi," *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*, <<http://ja.wikipedia.org/wiki/街頭テレビ>> (accessed 12 July 2009). The impetus of television popularization includes the Crown Prince's wedding in 1959 and the Tokyo Olympics in 1964.

<sup>374</sup> Asanuma was assassinated by seventeen-year-old Yamaguchi Otoyō (1943-1970), at a televised rally for the upcoming Lower-house election.

With respect to magazine media, beginning in the mid-1950s through the 1960s, there was a weekly magazine boom. Newspapers and other publishing companies issued numerous weekly magazines, such as *Shūkan asahi*, *Sunday mainichi*, and *Shūkan bunshun*, and the weekly comic magazine, *Shūkan shōnen magajin*. Commonly these weekly magazines targeted either middle-class businessmen or teenagers, and were filled with photographs and illustrations. *Shūkan shōnen magajin*, a manga specialist widely read by children, was the most popular weekly magazine. For example, *Shūkan asahi* reached sales of one million copies in September 1954, demonstrating its popularity and potential as a venue for the exchange of information and opinions.<sup>375</sup>

To a lesser extent, periodicals of photography, art, and architecture also experienced a peak in circulation during the period. These journals and magazines, all saturated with images, soared in their numbers of circulation. For example, the journal *Asahi guraifu* marked its highest domestic sales, at greater than 700,000, when it devoted twenty-three pages to black and white photographs of the atomic bomb victims in Hiroshima and Nagasaki in its 6 August 1952 issue, upon the lifting of the ban on the publication of such images after the US Occupation.<sup>376</sup> In addition, in Japan, the photographic medium was reaching a peak in terms of camera production, and the nation was becoming a “camera empire” after the development and marketing of Single Lens Reflexive cameras (later with a 35mm lens). Beginning in the late fifties, mini cameras by manufacturers like Asahi Pentax, Nikon (F series), and

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<sup>375</sup> Yoshida Noriaki, “Shuppan media no rekishi” (The History of Publishing Media), in *Shuppan media nyūmon* (Introduction to Publishing Media), ed. Kawai Ryōsuke (Tokyo: Nihon Hyōronsha, 2006), 37-38.

<sup>376</sup> Tokuyama Yoshio, *Genbaku to shashin* (The Atomic Bomb and Photography) (Tokyo: Ochanomizu Shobō, 2005), 13.

Olympus (Olympus Penn series), surpassed the popularity of the 35mm German-made Leica camera (models like M3 and IIIf).<sup>377</sup>

The 1964 Olympics further contributed to the construction boom of infrastructural public-works projects that began in the 1950s, such as Tange Kenzō's shell structured Yoyogi Olympic Stadium (1964) and the first Shinkansen bullet train between Tokyo and Osaka (1964). Images of these projects were triumphantly championed in photography and film, leading to a maturation in the relationship between photography and architecture beginning in the mid-1950s through the 1960s. As discussed in Chapter 1, architectural journals like *Shinkenchiku* and *Kenchiku bunka* emphasized high visual quality in print by introducing photographs by well-regarded photographers like Ishimoto Yasuhiro. The construction boom brought about a plethora of opportunities for young photographers. Tange's 1964 Yoyogi Gymnasium, for example, established the canon of Japanese architectural photography by artists such as Ishimoto and the younger Murai Osamu and Futagawa Yukio, as seen in Ishimoto's photography of architectural structures featured in the December 1964 issue of *Kamera mainichi*. This issue also reported the Japan pavilion on display at the New York World Fair, which included an installation of Ishimoto's black and white photographs that visualized the built environments of Japanese heavy industries. This construction-architecture-photography phenomenon, on the one hand, produced numerous opportunities for younger photographers to specialize in the photography of architecture and urbanism, and on the other, stimulated the vision-based economy through the issuance and circulation of books and magazines filled with photographs.

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<sup>377</sup> Kondō Hideki, "Kokusan kamera no tenkanki kara seikyō no jidai e" (Japan-made Cameras: From the Transition Period to Prosperity), in *Shōwa 10-40 nen Kōkoku ni miru kokusan kamera no rekishi* (Shōwa 10-40 The History of Japan-Made Cameras as Seen in Advertisements), ed. Asahi kamera and Sakai Shūichi (Tokyo: Asahi Shinbunsha, 1994), 452-57.

After numerous international and domestic negotiations, Osaka was selected by the Bureau International des Expositions in April 1965, over Melbourne, Australia, as the site for the 1970 Expo. After a lengthy internal process, Ishizaka Taizō (1886-1975), chairman of the powerful economic and business federation Keidanren (Federation of Economic Organizations), was selected as the chairman of the Expo. Soon thereafter, or more specifically in 1966 Tange Kenzō was appointed to the position of architect for the Expo's master plan.<sup>378</sup>

Okamoto was then entrusted to be the artistic director for the Expo's thematic pavilion in July 1967. For Okamoto, one of the incentives to accept the artistic director position was to conclude his fifteen-year-long debate on tradition (*dentō ronsō*) with Tange Kenzō, which began in the mid-1950s, as discussed in Chapter 1. Learning that the Expo's Symbol Zone was going to be governed by the geometry-based Space Frame structure by Tange, Okamoto conceptualized the "Tower of the Sun" during a two-month trip he took to Canada, Central America, and South America in the summer of 1967. Regarding his tower design (Figure 4.8), Okamoto states as follows:

I will utilize this world's largest roof [to prove my point] . . . I now have the urge to puncture it. I want to challenge the elegant roof's flat surface with something outrageous. Instantly, I came up with the image of a 70-meter high tower to challenge the 30-meter high roof. The shining face of the tower, with bulging eyes, looked down at the entire Expo site, and staring straight at the [expo's] landmark tower, which stands at the elevated southern edge of the site. By offering this image of a showdown, I could create logic and lend tension to

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<sup>378</sup> Ōsugi Kōji, "Okamoto Tarō ga jinrui ni hanatta messeeji" (Okamoto Tarō's Message to Humankind)," in *Okamoto Tarō to Taiyō no tō* (Okamoto Tarō and the "Tower of the Sun"), ed. Hirano Akiomi (Tokyo: Shōgakukan Creative, 2008), 132-33.

the Expo's flipped toy-box like atmosphere. For this reason, I have decided to realize the tower project.<sup>379</sup>

Further stating that, "I would accomplish [this task] even in a bloody struggle," Okamoto indicated his resolve to present the juxtaposition at the Symbol Zone as his concluding remarks on the critical and lasting debate on tradition.

The selection of Okamoto Tarō as the artistic director for the Expo's theme pavilion, the "Tower of the Sun," arguably indicates the Expo organizers' willingness to critically reinterpret the notion of tradition and challenge the linearity of history, as expressed in the Expo's theme, "The Progress and Harmony of Mankind."<sup>380</sup> Okamoto's appointment took numerous organizational meetings by the ad-hoc Expo Study Group, which was formed voluntarily among the cultural elite and included science fiction writer Komatsu Sakyō, anthropologist Umesao Tadao, architectural critic Kawazoe Noboru (the leader of the architectural collective Metabolism), cultural anthropologist Kawakita Jirō, and economist Kamakura Noboru. To many of them, Okamoto was the only choice for the position because of his popularity and criticality

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<sup>379</sup> Ōsugi, "Nihon bankokuhaku kenchiku zōkei" (1971); reprinted in *Okamoto Tarō to Taiyō no tō* (Okamoto Tarō and the "Tower of the Sun"), 137.

<sup>380</sup> The theme had been finalized by the Expo Theme Subcommittee of the Osaka International Expo Preparation Committee by the fall 1965. The subcommittee set the following reasons for the theme: (1) it reflects world currents, and symbolizes the development of human activities in each of the three fields of industry, science and culture; (2) it emphasizes the ground-breaking significance of the first expo in Asia; and (3) filled with dream and attraction, it would actively induce foreign countries' participation, and thereby trigger deep empathy. "The Significance and Characteristics of the Theme Pavilion" in *The Official Record of the Japan World Expo*, 1971. (In April 1966, the subcommittee set forth the following four sub-themes: "For the fulfillment of richer lives," "For a richer use of nature," "For the design of a more favorable life," and "For deeper mutual understanding.") In April 1967, the theme committee concluded that the Expo's organizers should establish the theme pavilion to reflect the main theme. Okamoto was not officially appointed as the artistic director until May 1967.

as an artist and commentator. As a member of the Study Group, Okamoto had proposed a wide range of provocative interpretations on the subject of tradition, as reflected also in his oeuvre and in his essays in *Nihon no dentō*. On one occasion in 1965 prior to his appointment, he addressed the meaning of the Expo for Japan, clarifying its objectives:

This coming expo should consider “particularity” at a higher realm in order to project a realistic Japan, exceeding the world at a higher realm, and to avoid projecting Japan as a nostalgic state. . . . We should present “particularity,” overcoming conditions such as “poverty” that handicap us, and dismissing the notion—which reflects an inferiority complex often held by developing countries—that generalization constitutes “progress.”<sup>381</sup>

Okamoto believed that the Expo should serve as a means to bring Japan to a higher place that rejected the generalized notion of “progress” and questioned everything “developed.” To him, the Expo was a venue by which he could thoroughly question and criticize “modernity” and “progress,” using his avant-garde methodology of *taikyoku shugi*, or a theory of polar opposites.<sup>382</sup> This theory, for him, meant denying and fighting everything, then finding a solution in a higher plane. He believed that the doctrine often produced a critical and beneficial tension leading to resolution.

Applying the doctrine in a speech entitled “My image of the expo,” Okamoto on 23

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<sup>381</sup> Okamoto, from the panel discussion with Komatsu Sakyō, Yoshizaka Ryūsei, et al., titled “1970 nen nihon bankokuhaku wa ika ni arubekika” (How the 1970 Japan World Expo Should Be) at the first symposium of Bankokuhaku o Kangaeru Kai (The Group for Thinking about the Expo), date? October 1965; quoted in Ōsugi, *Okamoto Tarō to Taiyō no tō* (Okamoto Tarō and the “Tower of the Sun”), 135.

<sup>382</sup> Okamoto Tarō, “Taikyoku shugi” (Doctrine of antithesis),” in *Okamoto Tarō sakuhinshu* (Collection of writings by Okamoto Tarō), vol. 1 Kyōno geijutsu (1972)(Today’s arts): reprint (Tokyo: Kōdansha, 1979), 372-74.

June 1967 declared, “Real ‘harmony’ can be achieved in a higher plane by completely rejecting progress and fighting it. . . . [Only] if we use the theme ironically can it be useful. . . . [Once] we deny ‘progress,’ we will be able to find the meaning of the theme, ‘Progress and Harmony.’”<sup>383</sup>

Upon his visit at the 1967 Montreal Expo at the beginning of his trip to the Americas, Okamoto felt that the Expo under the theme “Humankind and its World” was not sufficiently focused. He sensed that the contents of many of Montreal’s exhibitions were too scholarly and thus did not speak to general audiences. Okamoto hoped that the 1970 Expo would be different, because it had a central area (the Symbol Zone) where the theme should be critically, symbolically, and visually represented, with the thematic exhibitions not only helping the visitors to suspend their conventional ideas but disorient them. Ever a risk-taker, he wanted to create an Expo of glittering primary colors, filled with images that would completely demolish the audience’s ordinary thought processes through the irreconcilable critical tension generated by and among the images.<sup>384</sup>

Although Tange was not involved in the selection of Okamoto, it appears that he was pleased to have Okamoto as part of the Symbol Zone team. In addition to participating in the debate over tradition, they had worked together during the fifties and sixties, beginning as fellow members of the International Design Committee, as discussed in Chapter 1, and subsequently collaborating on several architectural and art projects. For example, in 1956, Okamoto produced several mural paintings with porcelain surfaces, including “The Wall of the Sun” and “The Wall of the Moon,” for the Tokyo Metropolitan Hall designed by Tange. Okamoto found it challenging and rewarding to create murals in an environment of modern architectural clarity and

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<sup>383</sup> Okamoto, *Nihon keizai shinbun*, 24 June 1967; quoted in *ibid.*, 137.

<sup>384</sup> *Asahi shinbun*, 5 August 1967, evening edition.



simplicity, and he felt compelled to create tension by juxtaposing “the mystery of decorative illogicalness and shivering emotion” with modern architecture encased in concrete.<sup>385</sup> He believed that the passionate friction brought by an abstract mural based on antithetical approaches would generate a sense of “the wholeness of humankind” in the rather detached atmosphere of modern architecture.<sup>386</sup> Okamoto perceived the mural painting project with Tange in 1956 as “a battle against architecture.”<sup>387</sup> When he was brought into the Tokyo Metropolitan Hall for the first time to see the architecture near completion, he felt first overwhelmed and soon oppressed by its monumentality, “as if looking at a hangar from beneath a bridge.”<sup>388</sup> Glancing at his guest, Tange told Okamoto that the architecture would not have any impact even if Okamoto challenged it. With this exchange, Okamoto felt an urge to create mural paintings that would lift up the giant concrete cluster from underneath.<sup>389</sup> This dialectically opposing relationship between Tange and Okamoto continued onward/entered a new phase with the Symbol Zone project.

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<sup>385</sup> Okamoto Tarō, “Dezain to ningen: Gendai zōkei e no hihan” (Design and Humankind: Criticism toward Contemporary Plastic Art), *Kenchiku bunka* (April 1956); reprinted in *Aoyama jidai no Okamoto Tarō 1954-1970: Gendai geijutsu kenkyūsho kara Taiyō no tō made* (Okamoto Tarō in Aoyama 1954-1970: From the Contemporary Art Institute through the “Tower of the Sun”), ed. Satō Reiko, et al. (Kawasaki: Tarō Okamoto Museum of Art, 2007), 29-31.

<sup>386</sup> Ibid.

<sup>387</sup> Ibid.

<sup>388</sup> Ibid.

<sup>389</sup> “Tarō’s Paintings and Constructions” in *Okamoto Tarō no kaiga/The Paintings of Tarō Okamoto*, ed. Tarō Okamoto Museum of Art. (Kawasaki: Tarō Okamoto Museum of Art, 2009), 93.

## ARCHITECTURE AND ART

### Okamoto Tarō's "Tower of the Sun"

Okamoto's "Tower of the Sun" and the other two towers, the "Tower of Motherhood" and the "Tower of Youth," occupied the central deck of the Festival Plaza. The largest among the three, the "Tower of the Sun" rises seventy meters into the air, punctuating the Space Frame, and spreads its arms wide on either side, connecting the main tower to the frame. The other two towers stand in front and back of the main tower. The main tower, made of reinforced concrete, is in the form of a cylindrical shell that is twenty-two meters in diameter at the base. Based on Okamoto's conceptual design, the tower was designed by architect Yoshikawa Ken with the assistance of structural engineer Tsuboi Yoshimasa. A gold-colored aluminum sun mask with a diameter of twelve meters crowns the tower and flashes at night, when the two 3.6 kilowatt lamps in its eyes are illuminated. It also sends two powerful, slightly lavender beams of light into the darkness.<sup>390</sup> The tower had two other sun faces or masks: a main face, with a diameter of ten meters, engraved on the front of the body, and a second face, entitled the "Black Sun" (Figure 4.9), with a diameter of eight meters, attached on the reverse side of the tower. These sun face-masks suggest Okamoto's indebtedness to primitivism and the pre-Columbian designs of Mexico. Further, his interest in pre-Columbian art and ethnology, while he was involved with the Surrealist-inflected intellectual circle of Georges Bataille and Michel Leiris, inspired the Japanese artist to reinterpret primitive art from Latin American tribes as a precursor of modern art. Okamoto's interest in these objects was not simply for the

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<sup>390</sup> The Editorial Committee of The Second Architectural Convention of Japan, *Kako kūkan ningen Nihon bankoku hakurankai kenchiku shashinshū/Structure, Space and Mankind Expo Photographic Publication of the Architecture of the Japan World Expo, A Photographic Interpreter*, 2 (Osaka: The Second Architectural Convention of Japan of the Architectural Association of Japan, 1970), 27.

purpose of tracing similarities in style and motive. Rather, he viewed them as an opportunity to interrogate the aesthetic properties learned and acquired by artists, scholars, and the general public through exposure to the canonical works of modern Western art.<sup>391</sup> This comparative methodology was also introduced in his analysis of Jōmon and Yayoi artifacts from prehistoric Japan.

Okamoto's two-month trip (from 8 July to 4 September 1967) to Montreal, Canada, and a number of Latin American countries, including Mexico, Guatemala and Brazil, was instrumental in helping him decipher and conceptualize his position on the Symbol Zone and to firm up his conceptual designs for the "Tower of the Sun." The original purpose of the trip was to research and create a documentary film, titled *New World: Okamoto Tarō's Search for the Latin American Continent* and produced by Shibata Film Production. The film project was conceived as a way to introduce through Okamoto's eyes the prehistorical primitive culture of Latin America. He visited Paris and Montreal, then journeyed through Mexico, Guatemala, Columbia, Peru, Brazil, Bolivia, and Argentina.<sup>392</sup> In addition, he visited the Hotel de Mexico in Mexico City, where he was requested to create a mural in time for the Mexico City Olympics in 1968.<sup>393</sup>

Throughout the trip, he and his travel companions (i.e., his assistant Okamoto Toshiko and a hired cameraman) took numerous snapshots not only of the objects and architectural structures they encountered, but of themselves looking at them.

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<sup>391</sup> Imafuku Ryūta, "Ishi to taiyō: Okamoto Tarō to Mekishiko" (Stones and the Sun: Okamoto Tarō and Mexico), in *Okamoto Tarō to Mekishiko: Atsui manazashi* (Okamoto Tarō and Mexico: A Fiery Gaze), exh. cat. (Kawasaki: Tarō Okamoto Museum of Art, 2002), 28.

<sup>392</sup> Ōsugi, *Okamoto Tarō to Taiyō no tō* (Okamoto Tarō and the "Tower of the Sun"), 133-34.

<sup>393</sup> The painting, entitled *Tomorrow's Myth* (Ashita no shinwa), was never completed for the hotel, because of the untimely death of the businessman who commissioned the work. The painting was recently discovered in Mexico City and was returned to Japan, where it is currently installed on a long public wall at Shibuya Station in Tokyo.

Simultaneously, Okamoto produced a dozen conceptual drawings of the tower. Below, I compare the photographs he and his companions took with his drawings, all of which were created during the trip. To Okamoto, a camera was an extension of his eyes and body. He photographed anything he perceived as striking or peculiar, without aiming for any particular composition, and using only a single-lens reflex camera, often an Olympus Pen F series camera. As a result, his photos were often tilted or out of focus, seemingly shot in haste, but they portrayed the excitement of his seeing. Concerning these, the photographer Tanuma Takeyoshi, who in 1957 developed Okamoto's seventeen rolls of monochrome 35mm shots of the *namahage*, a vernacular ritual, from his trip to northern Akita Prefecture, has written:

[Okamoto] sometimes misjudged the exposure, but nevertheless he got closer and closer to the action of the *namahage*. The contact sheets demonstrate Okamoto's excitement as he took the shots. He takes pictures of subjects at the instant he is moved by them, meaning his shots are always right on the mark, and since he shoots until he feels he had enough, the excitement naturally comes through in his pictures.<sup>394</sup>

Okamoto's album from the trip, which includes several dozen snapshots that are currently kept at the Okamoto Tarō Memorial Museum in Kawasaki, Japan, begins with photographs taken at the Montreal Expo on 12 July (Figure 4.10). Among them, Okamoto and the Space Frame designer Kamiya Kōji posed for each other in front of pavilions like the French Pavilion. There is a photograph of Buckminster Fuller's U.S. pavilion shot from a distance. Another photograph depicts Kamiya snapping away

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<sup>394</sup> Tanuma Takeyoshi, "The Contact Prints of Tarō Okamoto," trans. Ten Nine Communications, *Shashinten Okamoto Tarō no shisen* (Photography Exhibition: Through the Eyes of Tarō Okamoto) (Tokyo: The Tokyo Metropolitan Museum of Photography, 2005), 8-9.

with his camera. These photographs convey a sense of both men's excitement and wonder at being at the Expo site. Okamoto also paid attention to the surface structure of several pavilions, such as the West German and U.S. pavilions, creating photographs that convey a veil that delineates the space surrounding their soft surface. Some pictures also reveal that many of the pavilions were prefabricated and adopted "an architectural language of recurring primary geometric forms."<sup>395</sup> But it was Niki de Saint Phelle's organic, free-flow and biomorphic shaped, colorfully painted sculptures that most caught the artist's eyes. Tarō and Toshiko took turns in posing in front of them, and wound up with five pictures that filled an entire page in the album (Figure 4.11). These sculptures, painted in primary colors, must have been striking to Okamoto, for they share certain spatial elements with his later works, including his "Tower of Youth" at Expo '70.

Okamoto created basic conceptual drawings of the tower while he was in Montreal. Those drawings were recently published, and I refer to them in my analysis here. The drawing dated 12 July 1967 (Figure 4.12), drawn on the stationery of the La Salle Hotel in Montreal, reveals the overall structure of the tower; it has a pair of wings on a totem pole-like corpus, and it is crowned with the face of a sun. The body has six sinister-looking masks lined vertically. The tower's resemblance to totem poles suggests that Okamoto may have seen a totem pole at the Montreal Expo site, not to mention the totem poles he had previously seen at Musée d'Ethnographie du Trocadéro in Paris. A lighter stencil drawing that resembles a halo surrounding the tower's upper third implies that the tower punctuates the frame. The image of Okamoto's tower became further clarified and more sophisticated over the next two months, as he proceeded with his itinerary, as seen in the drawing dated 3 September 1967.

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<sup>395</sup> Andre Lortie, *The 60s Montreal Thinks Big* (Montreal: Canadian Center for Architecture, 2004), 190.

His trip to the ancient ruins in Mexico further embodied his ideas and inspirations, as translated in a sculptural format. On 20 July 1967, Okamoto visited the ruins of Teotihuacan, Mexico, where he climbed the Pyramid of the Sun, and encountered numerous pre-Columbian architectural ornaments, including a lion's head made of stone ornamented with linear and angular decorative patterns and motifs (Figure 4.13). His attention to the details of various relief sculptures and drawings found on the walls of the monastery is recognized in some of the snapshots. Perhaps equally significant are the extremely peculiar shots he took on his visit to a local potter in Metepec, Mexico. As seen in the photographs dated 21 July (Figure 4.14), he saw various clays, including numerous faces of a sun god. The top photograph shows a large face lying on the floor, over which Okamoto and the potter conversed. This viewing experience arguably reinforced his ideas to affix sun faces to the body of the tower, as seen in his drawing dated 17 July (Figure 4.12). On or about 21 July, he photographed four human statues with an abstracted and simplified body (Figure 4.15). These are reminiscent of Japanese *jizō*, or vernacular statues of the bodhisattva, Ksitigarbha, and of the tower's body. Okamoto's attraction to pre-Colombian art, as shown in these photographs, can be traced back to his fascination with ethnography and Japanese primitivism, in particular prehistoric Jōmon culture, as a source for the "Tower of the Sun."

Okamoto next visited the work of Diego Rivera (1886-1957), and the studio of David Alfonso Siqueiros (1896-1974), where he met the artist. These encounters inspired the Japanese artist to create work of a mural and monumental scale, and inter-media work using sculptural and painting elements. On 22 July he visited Siqueiros in his studio at the Polyforum in Mexico City (Figure 4.16), where the master muralist was creating his last monumental mural paintings and installation, "The March of Humanity" (1964-68), which depicts the history of human struggle.

Siqueiros's paintings of biomorphic and accentuated angular human bodies with muscles and joints resemble the bodies that Okamoto painted in the fifties and sixties, for example in a mural he created after the trip, "The Myth of Tomorrow" (1968) (Figure 4.17), which depicts human figures blasted by an atomic bomb. For Okamoto, who shared with Siqueiros a belief in depicting human suffering, resurrection, and energy in primary colors and abstractions, whether in painting or sculpture, the visit must have been an extraordinary occasion that reconfirmed his interest in exploring sources of human history and energy in a monumental sculptural format. Similarly, Rivera's mosaic work for the Stadium of the National Autonomous University in Mexico City (Figure 4.18) gave Okamoto a chance to take a close look at a male figure in giant relief sculptural format. This may very well have interested the artist in his process of imagining the corpus of his "Tower of the Sun."

His visit to the Museo de Antropologia in Mexico City on 28 July gave the artist an opportunity to view and photograph in person a wide range of pre-Columbian objects, in particular, the Mayan calendar. Similarly, his visit to Art Popular in Salvadore, Bahia in Brazil gave him a chance to see and photograph a wide range of premodern and vernacular artifacts, often including masks and human statues. Arguably, the opportunity to view these objects overlapped with his earlier experience of photographing the Jōmon clays at various Japanese museums, and allowed him to conceptualize the contents of the thematic exhibitions at the Expo.

I propose, likewise, that his experience of standing in the middle of the ruins of the pyramids in Monte Alban, Oaxaca, Mexico (Figure 4.19) or of the houses in Machu Picchu, Peru, inspired him to imagine the scale of the Festival Plaza and the tower he was going to create. It is plausible that, in immersing himself in the ruins, he experienced an eternal sense of time and space that compelled him to create an environment of a similar scale. His visits to these ancient sites were followed by his

visit to Brasilia, Brazil on 24 August, where he walked around the then-newly built capital of modern architecture, in particular the Federal Capital building complex (Figure 4.20). Okamoto was struck both by its scale and the occasional interventions of organically shaped art in that modernist environment. One example is shown in the photograph, “Candangos,” featuring a pair of abstracted figurative sculptures standing with a pole. These figures, by Italian-Brazilian artist Bruno Giorgi (1905 – 1993), are located in front of and as part of the capital’s federal building in the city of architectural clarity. Okamoto’s encounter with the sculptures in Brasilia undoubtedly reinforced his earlier point of joining an architectural project as an artist. This was a decision that potentially could add irrational expression, as expressed in his 1956 essay, to an architectural structure itself, beyond its function.<sup>396</sup>

By the end of the trip, as seen in his drawing dated 3 September 1967 (Figure 4.12), Okamoto had created an image of the tower, close to completion. The inclusion here of the lightning pattern on the sides of the tower, and the face of the sun that crowns the tower, as well as an engraved face of a sun on the front belly of the tower, suggest that his viewing experiences unmistakably contributed to the completion of the image of the tower.

Before the trip, he had already begun to learn about the master plan of the Expo, including the Space Frame structure, and to conceptualize his desire to counter it with his own creation. The drawing, dated 28 June 1967, shows his idea of connecting the tower through one arm to the frame, indicating his clear understanding of the surrounding environments.

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<sup>396</sup> Okamoto Tarō, “Dezain to ningen: Gendai zōkei e no hihan” (Design and Humankind: Criticism toward Contemporary Plastic Art), *Kenchiku bunka* (April 1956); reprinted in *Aoyama jidai no Okamoto Tarō 1954-1970: Gendai Geijutsu Kenkyūsho kara Taiyō no tō made* (Tarō Okamoto in Aoyama 1954-1970: From the Contemporary Art Institute through the “Tower of the Sun”), ed. Satō Reiko, et al. (Kawasaki: Tarō Okamoto Museum of Art, 2007), 31.



Through the punctuation of the frame roof with his tower, Okamoto desired to “create an outrageous space” by negating two of the most prominent conflicting values held by the Japanese in general at the time: West-driven modernism and its reactionary traditionalism. In this dialectics, Okamoto presented a concrete example of his doctrine of antithesis, the foundational principle of his artistic philosophy. The tower’s punctuation of the frame roof conveys pairs of opposing values such as “shadow” and “light,” the rational and the irrational, and the organic and the inorganic. Okamoto believed that these opposing values, instead of compromising each other, collide against each other and generate a tension that leads to the possibility of generating something new at a higher level.<sup>397</sup>

I further contend that, to Okamoto, art and architecture, and accordingly artists and architects, similarly signified two opposing concepts, and that he envisioned this tension as having the potential to create art of a higher realm. In his desire to transcend a single medium, he wanted to create an architecture work that was also sculpture:

[It] would be fine for an architectural structure itself to be a sculpture.

That might not serve its inherent purpose but taking such an adventure itself is a program of the architecture. I want to create a magical space that encases human beings in the universe of art, in all of the surrounding environments, from the ceiling to the floor. I want to create a space representing the totality of an amateur’s imagination, to be examined thoroughly by experts in each and all fields, rendering it as close to the imagination as possible, so that a wonderful humane monument can be created.<sup>398</sup>

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<sup>397</sup> Ōsugi, *Okamoto Tarō to Taiyō no tō* (Okamoto Tarō and the “Tower of the Sun”), 142-43.

<sup>398</sup> Okamoto Tarō, *Gabunshū Kuroi taiyō* (Book of Paintings and Essays: The Black Sun) (Tokyo: Bijutsu Shuppansha, 1959) quoted in *Okamoto Tarō to Taiyō no tō*, 143.

Okamoto also introduced the example of Le Corbusier to argue for the merit of his argument. The Swiss architect considered himself to be an artist and not an architect, and for this reason, he was able to bring astonishingly fresh innovations to the field of architecture.<sup>399</sup>

Tange's exact reaction to Okamoto's desire to punctuate the Space Frame remains unknown, but Isozaki has described the general reaction of the Tange camp to Okamoto's proposal as one of shock and utter incomprehension. To them, Okamoto was anti-modern and seemed to be motivated by a value system entirely different from theirs. These are Isozaki's reflections on Okamoto's proposal:

[When] at last I saw Okamoto's tower (looking like a giant phallus) penetrating the soft membrane of the roof, I thought to myself that the battle for modernity had been finally lost. The primordial – which Tange had poetically cast as “primeval darkness and eternal light” ended up as bombastic kitsch, in all too candid a manner. The smiling mask affixed to the tower felt somewhat eerily like a presiding alien – upsetting enough by itself. But, what was worse, you had to acknowledge the fact that Japan-ness was so omnipresent and in such a saddening manner.<sup>400</sup>

### **Three Thematic Installations inside the “Tower of the Sun”**

Upon his return to Japan, Okamoto further conceptualized the thematic exhibitions. He organized the following three thematic installations at each different level, in and around the “Tower of the Sun”: in the basement level (beneath the Plaza),

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<sup>399</sup> Okamoto Tarō, “Dezain to ningen: Gendai zōkei e no hihan” (Design and Humankind: Criticism toward Contemporary Plastic Art), 31.

<sup>400</sup> Arata Isozaki, *Japan-ness in Architecture*, 56.

an exhibition titled *The Past – Genesis of Life* on which he collaborated with science fiction writer Komatsu Sakyō, and which consisted of the sections *inochi* (life), *kokoro* (mind), and *hito* (human); within the “Tower of the Sun,” the exhibition titled *Energy of Life*; and in the space within the Space Frame, an exhibition titled *The Future – World of Progress*, which was sub-produced by Kawazoe Noboru. The exhibitions, which displayed numerous historical artifacts and employed state-of-the-art technology for visual presentation (e.g., videos and multimedia projections), constituted the dialectics of seeing between Okamoto and the curators, on the one hand, and the audience, on the other: multiple values, properties and interests that formed the past, present and future histories of Japan were visualized and represented. Through preparing the exhibitions, Okamoto, his exhibition curators, and the Expo authorities underwent a myriad of negotiations and compromises to reach the final form of the exhibitions, a process that revealed and contextualized the complexities and nuances of the politics of visual presentation in 1970 in Japan.

1970 was undeniably a politically charged year. The political turbulence of the sixties culminated in 1970, with waves of protests including those against U.S. military bases in Japan and the Japanese government’s support of the U.S. war effort in Vietnam; those against the projected 1970 renewal of the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty; and the farmers’ movement against the construction of Narita Airport.<sup>401</sup> As a result, anything that might validate, support, or promote these activities was censored in the exhibition and printed formats of the Expo, both by the Expo authorities and the Japanese government. One graphic designer famously characterized the Expo, as a

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<sup>401</sup> Wesley Sasaki-Uemura, “Anpo Struggle” in *Encyclopedia of Contemporary Japanese Culture*, ed. Sandra Buckley (New York and London: Routledge, 2001), 19-20. Within two weeks of the opening of the Expo, nine members of the Red Army Faction hijacked Japan Airlines Flight 351 and diverted its route from Tokyo–Fukuoka to Tokyo–Pyongyang, taking 129 hostages.

venue for artistic expression in which “[There] was no freedom of expression at the Expo.”<sup>402</sup>

Nonetheless, a substantial portion of the best artistic talent available in Japan at that time was absorbed into the Expo, including the following three curators (or “sub-producers,” as they were called) for each of the three exhibitions: Komatsu Sakyō, the science fiction writer mentioned above; Chiba Kazuo, a visual artist; and Kawazoe Noboru, the architectural critic and leader of Metabolism, the architectural collective discussed in Chapter 3. Among the most notable talents appointed by Okamoto were graphic designer Awazu Kiyoshi (also a member of Metabolism) for graphic design, composer Mayuzumi Toshirō for sound effects, and film director Teshigahara Hiroshi for moving visual effects. With Okamoto and his close artistic allies, the thematic pavilion exhibitions certainly presented a form of collectivism in postwar Japanese art, sound and architecture. In addition, the participants delegated to numerous artist-contractors the completion of various details for the exhibitions.<sup>403</sup> Many of these artist-contractors were lured into helping with the exhibitions because of the Expo’s prestige, not to mention its financial and technological abundance.

With respect to the concept of “festival” (*matsuri*), Okamoto wanted to create exhibitions that showed the dignity of the origins of peoples around the world, rather than simply to thematize a superficial and seemingly uplifting, future-driven “modernity” through flashy, meaningless multimedia installations. In the exhibitions, he wanted to interrogate and rebel against the Expo’s theme, “Progress and Harmony.” For him to examine the meaning of “progress,” he needed, in his own words, to first

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<sup>402</sup> Kimura Tsunehisa, “Genbaku kenbōshō to iu na no banpaku” (The Expo Named Amnesia of the Atomic Bomb), in *Ken 1* (Tokyo: Shaken, 1970), 53-54.

<sup>403</sup> Ōsugi, *Okamoto Tarō to Taiyō no tō* (Okamoto Tarō and the “Tower of the Sun”), 144-46.

explore “the silent and absolute fullness” of life in the past.<sup>404</sup> He also wanted to show that the elements of the past exist in both the present and the future, and ultimately visualize “the necessary and proud evidence” of human culture.<sup>405</sup> For this reason, with assistance from a group of scholars in ethnology and anthropology, he collected vernacular artifacts that refer to primitivism, such as statues of gods, masks, and living tools from Asia, Africa and Europe (Figure 4.21). They included a giant totem pole from British Columbia, a statue of the goddess Chalchiuhtlicue in Aztec mythology, masks from Thailand, and a giant face statue from Easter Island. Okamoto hoped the exhibition at the basement level to be a record of peoples who have communicated with the sacred supernatural and lived spiritually rich lives.<sup>406</sup>

The exhibition, “The Tree of Life” (*seimei no ki*) (Figure 4.22) was installed within the “Tower of the Sun.” The audience was led up several spiral escalators and staircases, gradually ascending to the wings of the tower, in a journey that allowed them to trace the genealogy of life forms from the Age of Protozoa to the Age of Mammals. The exhibition was visualized in 292 models of various life forms created by Tsuburaya Productions, the famous designer and maker of various miniature models and stage-props for the Godzilla film series, as well as other monster movies and television series. Artist Narita Tōru designed a dinosaur, and composer Mayuzumi Tetsurō created the theme music, titled “*Seimei no sankā*” (Ode to Life), for the installation.<sup>407</sup>

Once the audience reached the right wing of the tower, they entered an exhibition about the future in a space created within the frame, entitled “The Future –

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<sup>404</sup> Ibid.

<sup>405</sup> Okamoto Tarō, *Sekai no kamen to shinzō* (Masks and Idols of the World) (Tokyo: Asahi Shinbunsha, 1970) quoted in Ōsugi, 154.

<sup>406</sup> Ōsugi, *Okamoto Tarō to Taiyō no tō* (Okamoto Tarō and the “Tower of the Sun”), 144-46.

<sup>407</sup> Ibid., 156-57.

World of Progress” and consisting of four subsections. The fact that there was no specific exhibition on the present (except that the ground level of the Zone housed items relating to the present, including a photography exhibition, to be discussed later) between the exhibitions on the past and the future signifies Okamoto’s historiography. Further, Okamoto entrusted each of the sub-producers to create their own section, giving them the freedom to pursue their own ideas and directions. For example, Kawazoe Noboru, the sub-producer for the future section, included photographs of Nagasaki and Hiroshima in one of the subsections in order to compel the audience to reflect on the meaning of “progress.” But such provocations were almost non-existent in the installation by the other contributors of a giant satellite, a capsule apartment, and models of a future city.

In the first subsection, “Cosmic Space” (*uchū*) (Figure 4.23), the audience saw a life-size model of the fourth communication satellite to be launched by the International Telecommunications Satellite Organization (established in 1964) and entered an enclosed installation representing a cosmic capsule where they viewed a constellation of stars and listened to electric music.

In the next section, titled “Mankind” (*ningen*), they saw life-size suspended space capsule structures, followed by the next section, “The World,” where they experienced visual, mainly photographic, presentations with quadripartite structured exhibitions of photography and sculpture. The introduction section, titled the “Wall of Transition” (*tenkan no kabe*), featured sculptures of an intergenerational family standing in front of a wall in two segments: one with a cloud from an atomic blast, and the other with an image of the moon. The second section was represented in the “Wall of Contradiction” (*mujun no kabe*) (Figure 4.24), where the two facing walls, one painted red and the other blue, were hung with various documentary photographs of pertinent social and political issues in postwar Japan. The third section was a

multimedia presentation of 192 triangular screens that projected the lives and customs of peoples throughout the world, and the last section was visualized as a large sculpture of a pair of hands, one hand clearly female and the other clearly male.

It is possible to argue that this thoughtfully structured exhibition was perhaps too subtle in its physical scale at the exhibition on the future. But the importance of the photographic installation, the “Wall of Contradiction,” as one of few projects in the entire Expo to visually investigate the meaning of “progress,” cannot be overemphasized, and thus I will briefly discuss it here. Archival materials are almost non-existing, and thus I rely on footage on the exhibition from the Expo’s official film and on an essay written by Kimura Tsunehisa (1928-2008), a graphic designer who curated the exhibition.

The most controversial exhibition contents in the entire thematic pavilion were the photographs of atomic victims. The treatment of the photographs, from their selection to their editing and presentation, involved several layers of censorship, decision-making, negotiations and compromises, thereby revealing a vulnerable and problematic aspect of the Expo’s visual presentation. In addition to the exhibition the “Wall of Contradiction,” only one other exhibition visually dealt with the subject. This second exhibit was part of the Japan Pavilion, and was comprised of two rooms of a tapestry installation, the “Tower of Atoms/Tower of Sorrow” (*Genshi no tō/Kanashimi no tō*) (Figure 4.25) and the “Tower of Joy” (*Yorokobi no tō*), but it referenced the atomic bombs in an extremely indirect and obscure manner. Although there is a dearth of documentation on the project, the Expo’s official documentary film discloses how the images unfolded. In the ceiling wall of the first room, an abstracted image of the mushroom cloud overcast the Hiroshima A-Bomb Dome, beneath which a melting and evaporating image of keloid scarring was expressed in a grey biomorphic cluster. An attendant at the installation then makes an announcement: “Japan is the only country

that has experienced atomic bombs. Wishing that no other country undergoes an atomic experience, we have created this tapestry of *tsuzureori* from Kyoto.”<sup>408</sup> Here, the atomic experience was thoroughly aestheticized, reconstructed and fictionalized in a traditional tapestry, a medium that was deemed as feminine and premodern. The treatment of the subject matter signified the national pavilion’s conscious efforts to place the bombing in the past, behind the collective memory of viewers. In connection with the abovementioned layers of censorship, I should note that some Japanese prefectural pavilions attempted to exhibit photos of the incineration of Hiroshima and Nagasaki but were not allowed to do so.<sup>409</sup>

One of the curators of the thematic exhibitions, the aforementioned science-fiction writer Komatsu Sakyō, commented at the time on the Expo’s handling of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. In a newspaper interview, he was quoted as stating that, “[Dealing] straight with the atomic bomb, the nuclear issue, would most certainly lead to a politically charged matter, which could perhaps provoke foreign countries or create a conflict in domestic opinions. Thus we have decided to deal with the issue as a historical fact of human civilization, not in terms of a political agenda.”<sup>410</sup> In effect, dealing with the issue as a fact of history, the Expo authorities chose almost not to discuss it at all. My research has not clearly indicated Okamoto’s position on this matter, but, given that the subject matter of his 1968 mural, “The Myth of Tomorrow,” is about Japan’s experience with atomic bombs, I conclude that most likely the authorities suppressed Okamoto’s desire to visualize it.

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<sup>408</sup> Taniguchi Senkichi, *Kōshiki chōhen eiroku eiga Nihon bankokuhaku* (Official Long Documentary Film of the Japan Exposition), 173 min. Geneon, 2005.

<sup>409</sup> Kimura, 54.

<sup>410</sup> Komatsu Sakyō, *Asahi shinbun*, 27 September 1968; reprinted in *Okamoto Tarō to Taiyō no tō* (Okamoto Tarō and the “Tower of the Sun”), 151.



Against this backdrop, the selection and collage of the photographs of the atomic bomb victims constituted an avant-garde practice of Kimura, no matter how marginalized they were due to their censorship. The social and political amnesia regarding the experiences of Hiroshima and Nagasaki had been widespread in Japan. At the Expo, a quarter century after the incidents, “Hiroshima” and “Nagasaki” were the last things the Japanese government and other authorities wanted to visualize at the Expo. At the wall exhibition, no matter how much its space and budget shrank, Kimura had originally wanted to create a labyrinthine structure for the photographs, reminiscent of Kafka’s *Castle*, to visualize the contradictions of contemporary Japanese society.<sup>411</sup> The photographs of the atomic victims, gathered for the exhibition, were located and collected by Kanō Ryūichi and Aihara Hideji, both of whom worked for the Japanese Cooperative Association for Teaching Film Production.<sup>412</sup>

In the exhibition space, within the Space Frame, Kimura was given two walls of thirty meters, one painted red and the other blue, where a selection of twenty-five photographs was displayed. The photographs include Yamahata Yōsuke’s photos of the Nagasaki atomic bomb victims (as discussed in Chapter 3) and other photographs depicting a range of social and political issues, such as widespread pollution, thalidomide-induced disabilities, racial and ethnic discrimination, drug use, and the lack of welfare for the aged.<sup>413</sup>

The final form of the exhibition was reached only after several levels of censorship, involving government officials as well as the Expo Association, that pared down the fifty photographs originally selected to the twenty-nine exhibited. A tremendously high level of censorship by the government is shown in the several

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<sup>411</sup> Kimura, 52.

<sup>412</sup> Ibid., 59-60.

<sup>413</sup> Ibid., 59.

levels of deletion and re-editing of the exhibition. Kimura's original plan, to show a montage of a burned field and the faces of victims, was rejected by officials on the basis that it seemed "cruel" to provide such details of the tragedy. Kimura then selected fifty other photos from the destroyed cities, some of which the officials again found "too real," and they were edited down to twenty-five. A photograph of an atomic bomb victim with severe keloid scars was not permitted to be shown. Yamahata's portrait photograph of a mother with a burned face, completely hollowed out, breastfeeding her dying baby (Figure 4.26), was censored for reasons of "indecent" because her breast was exposed.<sup>414</sup> Although the censors issued demands and objections until the last possible minute, meaning a month before the Expo opened, the exhibition managed to survive. Nevertheless, only a fraction of the photographs originally intended to be shown were made available to the public.

Kimura was convinced that the photographs would be significantly more powerful in color. He had often found that photographs of the bomb victims were too aestheticized, weakening the impact of the exhibition itself. In such exhibitions, the landscape of a burned field was in danger of becoming sublime, and photographs of victims could be misread as ecstatic. In photography, they could easily become static objects. In order to avoid this situation, Kimura wanted the audience to look at the photographs themselves instead of seeing the facts in them.<sup>415</sup> For this purpose, he wished to reproduce the black and white photographs in color, but because of the extremely tight schedule for preparing the exhibition following the months of negotiating with censors, he was unable to do so. Instead, he had many of the atomic bomb photographs, particularly those shot in Nagasaki on 10 August 1945 by Yamahata Yōsuke, printed, toned in a range of oranges and reds. The photographs

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<sup>414</sup> Ibid., 57.

<sup>415</sup> Ibid., 61-62.

were freely collaged on the wall, several images repeated, with the written messages, “Where is humanity going?” (*Ningen wa doko e iku*) and “Reclaim our humanity” (*Ningensei o torimodose*).

Kimura’s decision to tone many of the exhibited black and white photographs was an effective one. Black and white photographs tend to convey consistent, organized and often flat information to viewers. For this reason, black and white photographs tend to belong to the realm of memory. They are equipped with a sense of equilibrium, and the information they contain is somewhat abstracted with visual and linguistic integrity and consistency. An identical image, whether printed as a color image or applied with colored paint, therefore tends to carry a different and more dramatic message, in particular when an image depicts a tragic event, as seen in Andy Warhol’s disaster series, where a single color is applied to black and white monotone lithographs. Documentary images, filtered through colors, are able to carry an emotional quality for storytelling. Color can break the order and consistency of an image, and pull it to a “now” out of the order of time and space constrained by monochromatic tones. Although the exhibited photos were not color images, by toning the black and white photographs and exhibiting them on a wall painted red or blue, Kimura successfully destroyed the photographs’ intended order of time and space, thus creating a visual rupture and allowing the photographs speak to the audience directly without lengthy captions.<sup>416</sup>

The marginalized “Wall of Contradiction” was sharply contrasted by the grand scale of the Expo’s official photographic exhibition and installation, titled “The Anonymous People Who Support the World” (*Sekai o sasaeru mumē no hitobito*). The latter exhibition was organized by Okamoto, along with two selection committee members who selected 619 black and white photographs, including sixty-six images

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<sup>416</sup> Ibid., 62-63.

created by Japanese photographers (Figure 4.27).<sup>417</sup> The exhibition was presented as part of the thematic exhibition, “The Present,” on the ground level at the foot of the main tower, and was installed as a strip of successive images (like the strip of a 35 mm photographic negative) in spiral and cylindrical architectural structures. Such strips were installed on top of each other vertically, each of them allowing a viewer to follow their images horizontally (Figure 4.28). Okamoto consciously selected photographs of a documentary nature, not fine art photography. He wanted to show photographs of anonymous people by anonymous image-makers (Figure 4.29), leaving the issues of originality and authorship out of the exhibition, and thereby shifting subjectivity from individual makers to individual viewers. With this curatorial decision, the photographs became a medium reflecting the viewers themselves. Okamoto assigned loose thematic divisions to the exhibition, such as life, work, education, and children. In the exhibition catalogue, photographs are grouped by those thematic divisions, with each group given a thematic caption such as “[t]he day of a working man is hard but comfortable,” and “[c]hildren invent games...for them playing is living.” None of the photographers is identified.

Nevertheless, the selection of the photographs unmistakably reflected the Expo’s politics of representation. First, 493 photographs were collected through such organizations as the Japan Association of the Camera Industry, from forty-six countries. In addition, approximately 450 photographs were sent to the selection committee by the participating countries’ Expo representatives. From there, 619 photographs were selected for the exhibition. In the selection process, the Expo’s organizer, the Expo Association, reserved the right to choose (or reject) photos for the exhibition, and a representative from each of the participating countries reserved the

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<sup>417</sup> Hirose Tomō, “Introduction,” *Sekai o sasaeru mumei no hitobito/Anonymous People Who Support the World*, ed. Contemporary Art Institute (Osaka: Japan Association for the 1970 World Exposition), 3-4.

right to refuse to exhibit a photograph created by an artist residing in the representative's country. With this mechanism in place, some photographs were removed from further consideration for being "unsuitable" for the exhibition theme.<sup>418</sup>

The exhibition focused on representing "anonymous people," and was roughly broken into three types of portraits: portraits of those engaged in a wide range of professional and productive activities; the portraits of people engaged in sports, dance and other types of cultural activities (e.g., festivals), including religious and educational activities; and portraits of children. Okamoto ensured that the selected photographs reflected the everyday lives of ordinary people throughout the world. For this reason, he chose photographs of a documentary nature, neither staged nor serving the purposes of nationalism or propaganda, provided that the photographs survived the reserved rights of censorship by the Expo Association and each of the participating countries.

Obviously, an exhibition that consists of black and white photographic images of ordinary people, in an elaborate architectural installation setting, is in part modeled after the landmark exhibition, *The Family of Man*. Originating at the Museum of Modern Art in New York, *The Family of Man* had traveled to Japan in 1955, and, more recently, a photographic exhibition of black and white photographs with a similar tone, entitled "The Camera as Witness," was organized at the Montreal Expo in 1967.

The Japanese presentation of *The Family of Man* in 1955 undoubtedly was still relevant to some Japanese audience members in 1970. Installed based on a design by the office of Tange Kenzō, the exhibition, as it had in New York, incorporated an elaborate architectural design for the purpose of increasing the effectiveness of communicating humanism through photography. Titled *Warera ningen kazoku* (We, the Human Family), the exhibition was installed in popular venues such as department

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<sup>418</sup> Ibid.

store galleries (e.g., the Matsuya Department Store in Ginza, Tokyo), in multiple Japanese cities. At the Museum of Modern Art in New York, numerous black and white photographs were installed in a web of narrative and architectural structures. The sizes of the images widely varied. Some photographs were hung in the air, while some were collaged on top of each other. Many of the photos in the exhibition came from journalism, but many were created by well known photographers. Representing the taste of exhibition curator Edward Steichen (who championed certain artists included in the exhibition, such as Eugene W. Smith, Ishimoto Yasuhiro, Roy De Carava and Wayne Miller), and, to a lesser extent, the interest of mainstream American politics at that time, as visualized in the museum's exhibition programs financed by the Rockefellers, this traveling exhibition was a highly political one at the height of the Cold War, conveying the single message of the power of U.S. democracy as translated in photography. Roland Barthes criticized the exhibition in Paris, stating that "the failure of photography seems to me to be flagrant in this connection: to reproduce death or birth tells us, literally, nothing."<sup>419</sup> To Barthes, the photographs of life and death without telling histories meant nothing, and the exhibition was merely a myth constructed by the exhibition organizers. Despite its political nature, the exhibition arguably demonstrated photography's democratic and flexible nature, such as the medium's capability of reproduction and its freedom to be collaged and juxtaposed with other photographs in an exhibition format.<sup>420</sup>

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<sup>419</sup> Roland Barthes, "The Great Family of Man," trans. Annette Lavers, *Mythologies* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1972), 101.

<sup>420</sup> Blake Stimson relates photography to democracy in terms of how pictures can be arranged for political, photographic and artistic imagining. In his words, "Social form and visual form are.... interrelated plastic media that were to be molded in tandem according to an overall design or plan or shape of the modern world." Blake Stimson, *The Pivot of the World: Photography and Its Nation* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2004), 16-17.

But the Japanese presentation of the exhibition was additionally politicized to such an extent that Yamahata's photographs of atomic bomb victims in Nagasaki were placed under a veil when the emperor, Hirohito, saw the exhibition, and soon afterward his photographs were removed entirely from the exhibition.<sup>421</sup> Ironically, the same Yamahata and his father, also a photographer, had been commissioned to photograph Hirohito and his family immediately after World War II by *Life* magazine; the photographs, titled "Sunday at Hirohito's," appeared in the 4 February 1946 issue of the magazine.<sup>422</sup> Whether it was the government's or any other intermediary's efforts to conceal Yamahata's Nagasaki photographs from the eyes of Hirohito, the act demonstrates an organized effort to accelerate the amnesia of the 1945 atomic bomb experiences.

The 1967 Montreal Expo's photography exhibition is indebted to *The Family of Man* exhibit for its visual effects and affect, as the exhibition's project officer Philip J. Pocock acknowledged in his introduction to the catalogue. The Montreal exhibition, entitled, "The Camera as Witness" (Figure 4.30), attempted to photographically contextualize the expo, whose theme was "Man and his World." It showed 500

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<sup>421</sup> Tokuyama, 88.

<sup>422</sup> I wrote a paper on the role played by photography in the shifting public image of Hirohito, after he lost his sovereign powers in 1945, in a graduate seminar offered by Professor Susan Buck-Morss during the fall 2006 semester at Cornell University. In my term paper, titled "Hirohito and His Sovereignty as Seen in Photography", I discussed the photographic essay, "Sunday at Hirohito's," which appeared in the abovementioned issue of *Life*, where the banal "Sunday" images of the emperor lounging with his family were featured. The essay simply says about the photographers, "Since the [imperial] family is fearful of assassination, American photographers were barred and Japanese photographers of the Sun News Agency used." At the time I wrote the paper, therefore, I was not aware that Yamahata Yōsuke and his father Yamahata Keinosuke were the photographers. It was only recently, when I examined the artist's chronology and realized that Yamahata Keinosuke founded the photo agency Sun News Photos in 1945, and that he and his son photographed the imperial family in December 1945 based on a request from the magazine. Yamahata Yōsuke, *Nihon no shashinka 23 Yamahata Yōsuke* (Yamahata Yōsuke, Japanese Photographer Series 23) (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1997), 68-69.

photographs that were taken in 81 countries and regions by 272 photographers living in 49 lands.<sup>423</sup> The photographs were selected mainly by the exhibition's international advisory committee, which consisted of two photographers, Robert Doisneau of France and Yousuf Karsh of Canada, and two curators, L. Fritz Gruber of Germany and Beaumont Newhall of the United States. The photography director of the Museum of Modern Art in New York, John Szarkowski, and the George Eastman House's Nathan Lyons also lent their curatorial eyes to the exhibition. The photographs chosen were mostly created by highly reputed photographers, European and North American, such as Marc Riboud, Robert Doisneau, Andreas Feininger and Elliott Erwitt. A principal difference between the two Expo exhibitions lies in that the Canadian one emphasizes the visual quality, and singular authorship of the images. As a result, the exhibition catalogue goes so far as to list contact information for the photographers in the exhibition. The Canadian exhibition also placed an emphasis on the "subjectivity" of the images and image-makers, arguing that the images were created through the lenses of extraordinary talents.

Based on the above analyses, I assert that the 1970 exhibition was closest to photography's inherent capabilities for anyone to produce an image because of the exhibition's efforts to deemphasize the singular authorship and aesthetic property of the photographs, treating each of the exhibited anonymous photographs as a document, or a trace, withdrawing as much as possible the intervention of curators, except for the reserved rights of censorship. This very likely reflects Okamoto's conscious departure from *The Family of Man* model, a canonical and classical photography exhibition that encapsulates the mid-twentieth century visual politics of both the United States and the Montreal exhibition. I argue that Okamoto's efforts in this vein indicate a conscious

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<sup>423</sup> Philip J. Pocock, "Introduction," *The Camera as Witness*, (Montreal: International Photography Exhibition, 1967), unnumbered page.



desire to depart from the trend of photography exhibitions, most notably *The Family of Man*, to show canonical images or images made by well-known photographers/artists. Okamoto's original approach to contextualizing photography in an expo setting clearly represents a discontinuity and a rupture from the conventional exhibition practices demonstrated in the two North American exhibitions.

### **Festival Plaza**

The most innovative part of the Symbol Zone was the Festival Plaza (Figure 4.31), a rectangle 110 meters long by 80 meters wide. Designed by Isozaki Arata, it served as a multi-purpose gathering and performing space that accommodated numerous performances and ceremonies on a daily basis during the Expo. Characterized by Isozaki as "soft architecture," the zone was divided into aerial and ground systems, with movable equipment consisting of five trolleys and one traversing rack suspended from the Space Frame; on the ground level were one movable stage, seven wagon stages, six sets of movable stands, and two performing robots, Deme (Figure 4.32) and Deku. All of these components were operated from the main control room, which was equipped with all types of control panels, electric computers, and real-time direct control devices. The architect wanted the space to be cybernetic, transformative, and invisible. By cybernetic, Isozaki meant an environment characterized by all of the following: (1) the environment is enveloped in a protective membrane for the sake of preserving definite, balanced conditions; (2) spaces are extensively interchangeable; (3) the environment includes a wide variety of movable equipment; (4) a man-machine system is developed; and (5) this system possesses a self-instructing feedback channel.<sup>424</sup> By transformative and invisible, he meant that

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<sup>424</sup> Isozaki Arata, "Invisible City," trans. Ken Tadashi Oshima, *Isozaki Arata*, ed. Ken Tadashi Oshima (London: Phaidon, 2009), 197.

the space should emerge and disappear, depending on the needs of the programs. Extensive lighting, sound, and set equipment, all computer-controlled, were thus suspended from the Space Frame, and some were stationed on the ground level below.<sup>425</sup>

Wanting to realize his early writings and unbuilt designs, in the design of the Festival Plaza, Isozaki created a bare structure that responds to uncertainty and the fragmentation of time and space, presented by a series of performing programs that resorted to the principles of cybernetics. The Plaza, a momentary experience that would last for only a six-month period, was a perfect opportunity for him to test what it might take most minimally to create architecture. Simultaneously planning the design of the plaza and preparing for the “Electric Labyrinth” installation (discussed in Chapter 3), Isozaki used some common strategies and design schemes for the plaza as well, based on the theory introduced in his earlier essay, “Invisible City” (*Mienai toshi*), the details of which were discussed in Chapter 3.

In the plaza project, Isozaki tested his idea of architecture as a response to “uncertainty.” This experimentation was part of his argument for the dissolution of the practice of Modernist architecture that began in the sixties, specific to the political circumstances governing the decade up to 1970 in Japan. To him, the old-fashioned principles of Modernist architecture were in part epitomized in Tange’s Space Frame, a structure of certainty.

On his motivation and purpose for the design, Isozaki retrospectively articulated his interest in breaking with the fixed classical notion of “static” time and space, and to explore the possibility of re-interpreting the notion in architecture. He wished, in other words, to interpret architecture as living and constantly changing:

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<sup>425</sup> Isozaki Arata, “Festival Plaza,” *The Japan Architect* 45, 5/6: 164 (Tokyo: Shinkenchikusha, 1970): 60-64.

Was it possible to regard architecture as a thing that grows and changes, or moves from place to place? To consider space as a thing that includes action, movement, generation and change? Since architecture was to move, it would necessarily involve the concept of time. Architecture was not just space: I felt that the interpretation and expression of the time inherent in architecture was crucial. It was a matter of dissolving fixed, classical logic and rearranging architecture.<sup>426</sup>

More specifically, Isozaki made a case for the megastructure plaza to serve as a mere mechanism or apparatus to aid the presentation of time-based events and performances. In so doing, he declared the end of “mega-technology” (*kyodai na tekunoroji*) and the advent of an era of computer-aided and information-driven “invisible architecture,” signaling a clear departure from the functionalist theory and practice of the Modernist architecture movement. Isozaki instead defined the plaza design as the juncture of passing and coming, of disappearance and appearance. But arguably what he implied in the shift was that, in the larger picture, with its attendant complexities and nuances, the values of the Enlightenment that Japan had adopted from the West at the beginning of the Meiji period, a hundred years earlier, were losing their hold. In a sense, this ideological shift correlated with his access to the latest technology available, which enabled him to dismantle the functionalist norms of the Modernist architecture movement in his cybernetic design, in the course of his preparations for the Expo in 1970. Crucially, those preparations straddled the year 1968, marked as it was by the advent of global political radicalism and postmodernism.

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<sup>426</sup> Arata Isozaki, “Festival Plaza,” trans. Ken Tadashi Oshima, *GA Document 77* (Tokyo: GA, February 2000), 102.

Isozaki saw the plaza project as an experiment to test his idea of time-based invisibility. He therefore attempted to create a space, which he later called “*ma*” (meaning “space” in Japanese), an arena where the distinction of time and space is not yet formed; because such a space is always shifting it is rendered invisible.<sup>427</sup> In attempting to implement his own sense of place and time, as signified in the word “*ma*,” Isozaki elaborates as follows:

I believe that “space appears only in the time that humans perceive; therefore it is always specific, concrete, flickering, and never fixed.” At this juncture, my conception of time had begun to deviate wildly from the convention of space/time based upon modern science, as portrayed by the modernist architectural historian Sigfried Giedion and other mid-century critics. . . . I wanted, at all of the events, to grasp “*ma*” at the moment at which time-and-space had not yet been disentangled and rendered as distinct notions. I hoped to present the ways in which “*ma*” shows up in different modalities of thought and speech: logical, visual, and performative.<sup>428</sup>

It should be noted, as well, that his argument on the plaza reverts back to his earlier experience of witnessing the collapsing and burning of the city, and to his concept of the city as a ruin where both the future and the past mingle with the present.

For Isozaki, in addition to his own writings and projects, the imagination of cybernetic space derives from the age of experimental discotheques and performances in the 1960s, including *Nine Evenings of Theater and Technology* at the Armory in New York City (1966), and Andy Warhol’s nightclub Electric Circuits (1967-71), which combined psychedelic projections, rock music, dance and theater.<sup>429</sup> In addition,

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<sup>427</sup> Isozaki, *Japan-ness in Architecture*, 95.

<sup>428</sup> *Ibid.*, 89.

<sup>429</sup> Ken Tadashi Oshima, *Arata Isozaki* (London: Phaidon, 2008), 148.

he personally experienced Bruce Conner's psychedelic film and sound project in San Francisco.<sup>430</sup> The events, according to Oshima, conceptually and tangentially affected Isozaki's formulation of the Festival Plaza:

[These became] his inspirations to intensify and transform the perception of sound through electric processes as visual, physical and aural 'hyper projections' in the Festival Plaza's matrix of sound and light. In transforming theatrical techniques of generating illusion, Isozaki removed the proscenium to eliminate the boundary between the stage and the seats in order to create a 'hyper transformative' experience.<sup>431</sup>

The plaza accommodated a dozen events and programs every day from 9 A.M. to 11 P.M. for the duration of the Expo. The plaza's main programs (Figure 4.33) took place between 6:30 P.M. and 8:30 P.M. and they changed weekly. For example, the nightly program for the week of 20-25 May 1970, titled "Fantasia of Sounds and Lights," presented a performance that consisted of three acts. Various religious chants and songs, both ancient and contemporary, and from the West and East, were featured through the modern mechanics of sound and lighting, followed by a piano performance happening, then a disco dance inviting the audience to the plaza.<sup>432</sup> The program was participatory, intuitive, responsive and time-based, indicating the influence of the earlier Fluxus related-intermedia experimental events and performances in the mid-sixties in Japan. Because the stage space was wide, it accommodated multiple performances simultaneously, thus creating numerous simultaneous narratives, reminiscent of a Brugel painting or a Japanese screen painting, like the

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<sup>430</sup> Isozaki, in an interview with the author, Tokyo, 3 January 2008.

<sup>431</sup> Oshima, *Arata Isozaki*, 148.

<sup>432</sup> "Brochure for the Festival Plaza Program: 20-25 May 1970, 'Fantasy of Sounds and Lights,'" (Suita, Osaka: Japan Association of the World Exposition 1970), 1970.

seventeenth-century *Rakuchū rakugai zu*, where multiple narratives often co-exist. Isozaki felt that such an approach allowed audiences to choose which narratives to view in the course of walking past all of them, thereby increasing the chances for audience participation.<sup>433</sup>

The concept of the Festival Plaza is analogous to that of British architect Cedric Price's unbuilt Fun Palace (Figure 4.34), and that of the British architecture collective Archigram. Despite the similarities in their principal purposes and functions of the Festival Plaza and the Fun Palace, which was designed as a space for spectatorship and relaxation, Isozaki was not aware of the London unbuilt project until 1966 or 67, when he had already begun his research for the Festival Plaza.<sup>434</sup> In contrast to the Fun Palace, which aimed at responding to certain aspects of "uncertainty" caused by programming, but contained physical divisions within the pavilion, the Festival Plaza was entirely open in its layout. Instead of physical divisions in its structure, it had a wide range of moveable equipment that allowed it to respond to a wider variety of programs, as discussed earlier.

The images of some of the imaginary designs of a city by the British architecture collective, Archigram, had profoundly inspired Isozaki to cultivate his own vision of a city, and of the Festival Plaza.<sup>435</sup> Archigram was an avant-garde

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<sup>433</sup> Isozaki, in an interview with the author, Tokyo, 3 January 2008.

<sup>434</sup> Isozaki Arata, "Cedric Price: Shisutemu no naka ni kenchiku o shōkyo suru (Cedric Price: Erasing Architecture into the System)," *Kenchiku no kaitai* (The Dismantling of Architecture) (Tokyo: Bijutsu Shuppansha, 1975): reprint (Tokyo: Kashima Shuppankai, 1997), 134-168.

<sup>435</sup> According to Wikipedia, "Archigram agitated to prevent modernism from becoming a sterile and safe orthodoxy by its adherents. Unlike ephemeralisation from Buckminster Fuller which assumes more must be done with less material (because material is finite), Archigram relies on a future of interminable resources. . . . The works of Archigram had a Futurist slant being influenced by Antonio Sant'Elia's works. Buckminster Fuller and Yona Friedman were also important sources of inspiration. The works of Archigram served as a source of inspiration for later works

architectural group formed in the 1960s. Based at the Architectural Association in London, it consisted of Peter Cook, Warren Chalk, Ron Herron, Dennis Crompton, Michael Webb and David Greene. A Futurist, anti-heroic, and pro-consumerist group, “it drew inspirations from technology in order to create a new reality that was solely expressed through hypothetical projects. Committed to a ‘high tech’, light weight, infra-structural approach that was focused towards survival technology, the group experimented with modular technology, mobility through the environment, space capsules and mass-consumer imagery.”<sup>436</sup> Archigram’s influence was widespread, and elements of its style/philosophy were evident in a wide range of pop culture in the United Kingdom and beyond.

The British architecture collective was mostly visually oriented and aimed to design a city of imagination. Not entirely different from Isozaki’s early practice, it released its visionary and seductive designs of megastructure utopian cities in the age of urban metamorphosis in its journal *Archigram* published in the 1960s, as well as through exhibitions and installations. The collective’s monograph, published in 1973 in celebration of its magazine, honored its contemporaries, such as Isozaki and Reyner Banham, for their ways of imagining the city. Isozaki was invited to write a preface for the book, an indication of the collective’s profound influence on the Japanese avant-garde designer. On *Archigram*, Isozaki states:

During the mid-1960s, living in this confused, swelling city of the Far East, I was struck by a series of extraordinary and not undisturbing shock waves

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such as the High tech ‘Pompidou centre’ 1971 by Richard Rogers and Renzo Piano, early Norman Foster works, Gianfranco Franchini and Future Systems.” Wikipedia contributors, “Archigram,” <<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Archigram>> (accessed 14 July 2009).

<sup>436</sup> Ibid.

emanating from London. I did not resist them, and they lulled me into a pleasant intoxication. . . . [There] was the enormous destructive power carried to me on the wings of an underground magazine called *Archigram*...these shock waves of the 60s were characterized by their imprecations against the means and ends of the Establishment, but unlike past movements this one had no manifesto. . . . [What] is necessary is to exchange our old methods and materials for pulses capable of beaming complex stimuli to the senses over a prolonged period of time. . . . The reason I value Archigram's work over all that which has been performed during the last ten years to dismantle the apparatus of Modern Architecture is that it has been consistently counter-culture in character.<sup>437</sup>

Isozaki thus found a connection with Archigram because of the objectives and strategies they shared with the avant-garde counter-culture of the 1960s, which they valorized in their work of dismantling “the apparatus of Modern Architecture” and imagining the city.

Additionally, the collective's interdisciplinary nature—which often took the form of print media, and ranged from design to graphic work—found an excellent synthesis with Isozaki's practice, given that he also worked across several media, as discussed in Chapter 3. They were both immersed in the discourse of printed visual materials and visual economy. Often, part of the source materials for their work was derived from mass-produced illustrations and photographs, and they themselves became the subjects of printed materials, distributing their works and ideas through a web of print and visuals.

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<sup>437</sup> Isozaki Arata, “A Comment from Arata Isozaki,” in *Archigram*, ed. Peter Cook (New York: Princeton Architecture Press, 1999) (reprint of the 1972 edition), 4.



In particular, the collective's designs from the mid-1960s are relevant for Isozaki's design of the Festival Plaza (Figure 4.35). Two of the most notable influences are the design for *Living City Exhibition* (Figure 4.36) at the Institute of Contemporary Arts in London (1963), and the unbuilt design for *Plug-in City* (Figure 4.37), by Archigram member Peter Cook. The former was the exhibition of a cybernetic and organic city in which a kaleidoscopic urban "environmental" installation was presented in a gallery where audience members had the spatial experience of a "conditioning chamber, like the corner of some giant brain of an analogic computer."<sup>438</sup> The latter was an elaborately illustrated city plan, made of units, like human tissue that can be plugged in or multiplied, as the city needs to grow physically. Archigram's journals and books were saturated with imaginary visuals, often cartoon-like drawings or photomontages, that incorporated found photographs, logos, and other types of ready-made images. Their comic-strip influenced drawings are whimsical and reflect the dry wit and humor of British culture in the 1960s.

But it appears that Archigram did not explain what, historically, motivated it to create its megastructure designs. And that is what significantly separates Isozaki from the collective. Isozaki's desire to create a cybernetic mega-structure, a structure analogous to a city, derives from his visceral experience in witnessing the air bombing of Ōita to ashes, and in walking in the rubble of nearly obliterated cities at the end of the war, sensing the end of the modern history of Japan. His desire to create a new architecture came from a considerably different reason than the collective's. And, Isozaki's goal for the Festival Plaza was much more ambitious in its desire to create "a new structure of values, a new syntax . . . not merely in architecture, but in a far

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<sup>438</sup> Peter Cook, ed., *Archigram* (1972); reprint (New York: Princeton Architecture Press, 1999), 20.

broader sphere, [where] pre-established systems of every kind are disintegrating before our eyes.”<sup>439</sup>

Another visual influence on Isozaki in his conception of the plaza was the concept of motion-succession photography, as seen in the late nineteenth-century photographer Eadweard Muybridge’s successive photographs that show animals and humans in motion. My archival research in Isozaki’s office in 2007 uncovered the photographs he commissioned of one of his robots, Deme, created for the plaza (Figure 4.38). The dozen photographs, commissioned by Isozaki and created by Ōtsuji Kiyoji (1923-2001), artist, photographer, and former member of the collective Jikken Kōbō/Experimental Workshop (1951-ca.1957), depicted the robot in motion, based on the concept of Muybridge’s motion photography. The photographs not only visualize the potential of the robot as a response to spatial “uncertainty,” they also signify the position of Isozaki, in this project, as an architect located within an extensive web of experimental artists and architects in late-sixties Japan.

These seemingly slow-motion photographs, unified in one image, were shot using multiple exposures. To create a slow-motion photograph of the robot Deme that shows a trace of seven movements of the arm, Ōtsuji first set up the robot. Once it was lit as desired, Ōtsuji used a large-format camera (with a 4 x 5 negative) with a shutter system to photograph the robot, moved its arm to a slightly different location, and shot it again, seven times. Each time, he made one exposure of approximately 1/7 of a proper exposure so as not to overexpose the negative. In this way, multiple exposures were produced on a single sheet of film or a transparency.<sup>440</sup>

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<sup>439</sup> Ibid.

<sup>440</sup> I discussed the technical aspect of making these photographs with Del Zogg, an expert on photography processing and the print room manager at The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, on 21 July 2009.

This rather low-tech method adopted by Ōtsuji, which enabled Isozaki to visualize different temporalities in one photograph, offers a hint to his approach to space and time at the Festival Plaza. In each photograph, the multiple temporalities are traceable. The images suggest both the existence of multiple temporalities in one space, and a possibility of the collapse of all of those temporalities. The photograph visualizes Isozaki's approach to space and time as multiple and transformative, and it embodies the process of seeking to materialize the seen and unseen forces of a particular "space and time." As epitomized in the photograph, and as discussed in his essay "Ma-Space/Time in Japan," I assert that Isozaki's notion of time fused with space is applicable not only to the Festival Plaza but also to life and culture in general, as seen in Japan, reflecting the architect's belief that "the city, architecture, and various social systems are nothing more than processes."<sup>441</sup>

Ironically, the operating system of the Festival Plaza was too complex for anyone other than Isozaki to operate. Thus, soon after he became ill and left Osaka for his home in Fukuoka, the whole operating system and plaza became inoperable, creating a temporary ruin. Although the Expo was held at a transitory moment when "a mega-machine" was being replaced by a soft, computer-based, and information driven technology, Isozaki's Festival Plaza conceivably was too far ahead of its time.

### **Space Frame**

The Space Frame (Figure 4.39), which covers the central portion of the Symbol Zone, consists of trusses made up of seven-meter steel pipes. A rectangle of 291 by 108 meters, it is elevated to a height of thirty meters above the ground. The frame's roof structure was made of a double grid system, the framework of which employed a 10.8-meter module in the upper and lower chord elements and connected the two

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<sup>441</sup> Oshima, *Arata Isozaki*, 10.

layers by means of diagonal steel pipes also 10.8 meters long. Six columns, connected to the space frame by means of angle braces and supported on pin-joint bases, held the frame aloft.<sup>442</sup>

The architects of the frame, Kamiya Kōji and Tange Kenzō, conceived of it as having two functions: as a skin-like shelter, it protected the Festival Plaza and the exhibition area directly beneath the frame; and it provided a supporting structure that housed both the exhibition space and various theatrical and performative apparatuses and equipment. The exhibition space created within the frame structure, as discussed earlier, was conceptualized as a model of the city in the air. The frame connected the architectural and spatial elements and organized the various parts of the plaza as one. Thus, the frame was positioned as a super-architectural infrastructure on the scale of a city. Tange and Kamiya positioned the roof in tribute to one of the various proposals made in the 1960s of a three-dimensional infrastructure, as seen, for example, in the vertical core shaft for office buildings in the 1960 Tokyo Plan. The space frame structure is equipped with spatial evenness and mutability in each and all directions, and it has the mechanical characteristics suited for a large span structure. At the same time, its form is neutral, and thus is able to utilize the characteristics of the lower architectural and spatial elements that come within and beneath the frame.<sup>443</sup>

Originally developed by architects, including Buckminster Fuller, in the 1950s, the concept of the space frame was introduced to Japan for the first time in late 1955, when Konrad Wachsmann gave a series of lectures on the subject matter to a group of young architects and architecture students, including Isozaki. Tange met with Wachsmann on numerous occasions, including at a panel discussion for the architectural journal *Shinkenchiku*. The journal's February 1956 issue focused on

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<sup>442</sup> Kamiya, 53.

<sup>443</sup> *Shinkenchiku* 45:5 (May 1970) 165.

Wachsmann and his seminars, in which he encouraged his students immeasurably by urging Japanese architects to leave tradition behind. The photograph on the February issue cover (Figure 4.40), an image of his space frame model, was fresh and striking in its approach to notions like “rationality,” “clarity,” “pre-fabrication,” and “modernity.” The image of the frame became a symbol of Modernist architecture at a time when architects involved in the discourse on tradition (*dentō ronsō*) were in search of a place for tradition in modern design. The German architect and the structure made a considerable impression on Tange, as observed in his group dialogue with Wachsmann.

Another visual inspiration for Tange’s design of the Space Frame was Yona Friedman’s unbuilt megastructure projects, such as “Span-Over Blocks” (1957/8), “La Ville Spatiale”(1958/62), “Paris Spatial”(1959), and “Venice of Monaco”(1957) (Figure 4.41) all of which derived from the Parisian architect’s manifesto, *L’Architecture Mobile*. As part of the Urban Spatialists, defined by Michel Ragon in his book *Ou vivrons-nous demain?* (1963), Friedman saw mobility and change as basic human needs, and was interested in utilizing space in the air to construct a megacity, based on the “concepts of ‘democratization of the city’ (permitting every citizen to choose his habitation by computer).”<sup>444</sup> Tange and Friedman met in 1956 at the tenth CIAM congress, where mobility was discussed within the context of the main theme, “The Habitat: The Problems of Relationships.”<sup>445</sup> Friedman’s proposal for megastructure as a solution for the overcrowded metropolis found common ground both with Tange, who envisioned the 1960 Plan for Tokyo (as discussed in Chapter 3), and with younger Metabolism architects. In 1964, having learned about Tange’s

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<sup>444</sup> Banham, Reyner. *Megastructure: Urban Futures of the Recent Past* (New York: Harper and Row, 1976), 57-64.

<sup>445</sup> Sabine, Lebesque, and Helene Fentener van Vlissingen. *Yona Friedman: Structure Serving the Unpredictable* (Rotterdam: NAI Publishers, 1999), 10.

structural 1960 Tokyo plan, Friedman invited him to participate in an upcoming exhibition of sixteen city plans, evidencing their awareness of each other's presence and designs.<sup>446</sup> Friedman's imaginary unbuilt plans, composed of hand-drawn illustrations that often incorporate photography, may well have been another source for Tange's Space Frame; critic Hariu Ichirō in a 1970 essay mentioned the likelihood/possibility of Friedman's influence on Tange's frame design for the Expo.<sup>447</sup>

Tange's early subject for a visual analysis, the Imperial villa Katsura, and Ishimoto's photography of the architecture, were also relevant to the architect in the design process of the Space Frame. It would be an oversimplification to relate the seventeenth-century architecture's beam and column structure to the Space Frame, since by 1970 Tange had shifted his design focus from a functionalist design to a Structuralist one. When he realized beginning in the late 1950s that different parts of cities grow at different paces, he had shifted from the simplistic functional approach to the linguistic-based structuralism, and found it invaluable as an organizing principle. Based on the pioneering works of Ferdinand de Saussure, Roman Jakobson, Roland Barthes, and others, and further developed by Claude Levi-Strauss and Jean Piaget, structure was deemed as "a complex yet closed set of relationships in which the elements can be changed or replaced, but in such a way that they remain dependent on—while their meanings are determined by—the whole structural system. In other words, the individual units have meaning only by virtue of their relationship to one another."<sup>448</sup>

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<sup>446</sup> A letter from Yona Friedman to Tange Kenzō, dated 12 May 1964, invited Tange to participate in the exhibition. However, it remains unknown whether the Japanese architect actually took part in it.

<sup>447</sup> Hariu Ichirō, "Bunka no haikyo to shite no banpaku" (The Expo as Cultural Ruins), *Ken* 1 (1970): 111.

<sup>448</sup> Botond Bogнар, 109.

## Conclusion

At the Japan Expo '70, Okamoto's gesture to punctuate the Space Frame with the "Tower of the Sun" made a critical mark in the decade-long debate on tradition and modernity, or *dentō ronsō*, which was fully discussed in Chapter 1. By this artistic gesture, Okamoto created a rupture, arguing that a fire-burnt, organically shaped figurine of the prehistoric Jōmon culture will prevail as more vital to contemporary Japanese culture than the structure and genealogy of "modernity," measured by the linearity of the history of the West, as such, that is epitomized in Tange's Space Frame. Vigorously questioning whether there had indeed been any "progress" in postwar Japan, Okamoto countered the Expo's theme, "Progress and Harmony for Mankind" with the wide range of thematic exhibitions he orchestrated, and even with his own theme, "Regression and Deviance for Mankind." To Okamoto, such an optimistic expo theme unreflectively echoed the very two standard values that the Japanese people developed in the postwar years: first, the notion of modernity imposed by the West, and second, traditionalism (*dentō shugi*), as a reaction to the former. He wanted the tower both to become an antithesis to such values, hoping the tension would create a solution for breaking through the social and political stagnation that characterized the postwar years, and to propose a future source for the nation's vitality.

Isozaki took a radically different, but equally critical approach in his design of the Festival Plaza. In contrast with Okamoto's rejection of modernity, Isozaki rebelled against the linearity of time and the functionalism of Modernist architecture, both of which were epitomized in Tange's Space Frame. Interpreting space as "*ma*," where space and time are not distinguished from each other and the notion of completion is absent, he created a cybernetic space as his model for a future city.

Importantly, in the course of working out each of the major built elements of the Symbol Zone, Okamoto, Tange, and Isozaki to varying degrees deployed photography as a major source to further cultivate their imagination, and to ground their theoretical and ideological foundation for the Symbol Zone projects at the height of Japan's visual economy. The political and social nuances and complexities of the Expo were also fully reflected in the various projects utilizing photography, with respect to the management, regulation and exhibition of the photographs selected for the occasion.

In creating the Festival Plaza, Okamoto and Isozaki shared common concerns, challenging, on the one hand, the notion of linear history, and on the other, the orthodox values of modernism and reactionary traditionalism that were valorized in postwar Japan. And they succeeded in creating an “outrageous” space (to borrow Okamoto's expression) as an influential force of art and architecture at the end of the politically and socially most turbulent decade of Japan up to the present date. But, the presence of Tange, as visualized in the Space Frame, served to catalyze their rupture. Ultimately, their collective efforts, which wove together the complexities of politics and visual presentation, jointly and severally illuminated an aspect of the future, no matter how temporarily. In 1978, the Space Frame and the Festival Plaza of the Symbol Zone were demolished, leaving behind only the “Tower of the Sun,” which still stands today.

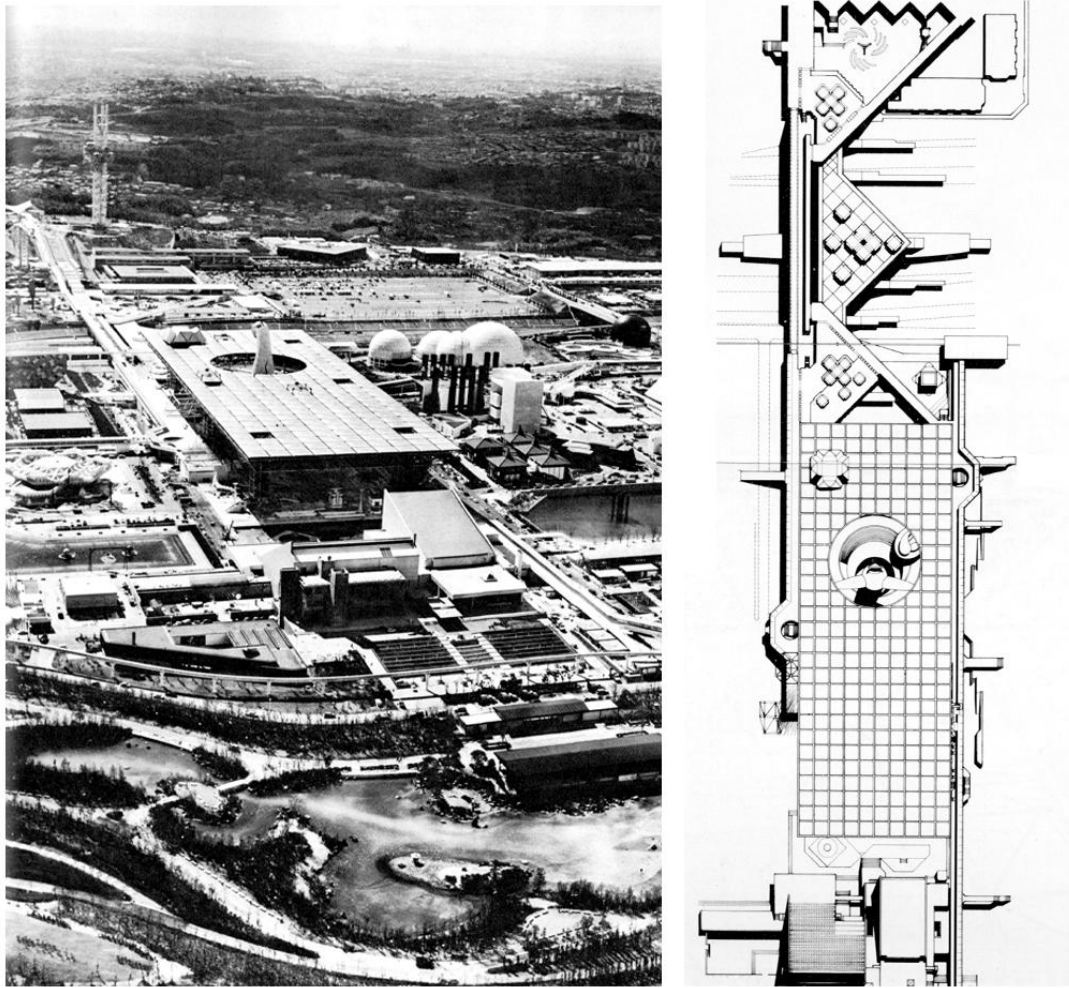


Figure. 4.1.



Aerial photograph and map of Expo '70

Figure. 4.2.



Aerial photograph and plan of the *Symbol Zone* of Expo '70



Figure. 4.3.



*Tower of the Sun* by Okamoto Taro under construction (c.1969)

Figure. 4.4.



*Tower of the Motherhood, Tower of the Sun, and Tower of the Youth by Okamoto Taro at the Festival Plaza (1970)*

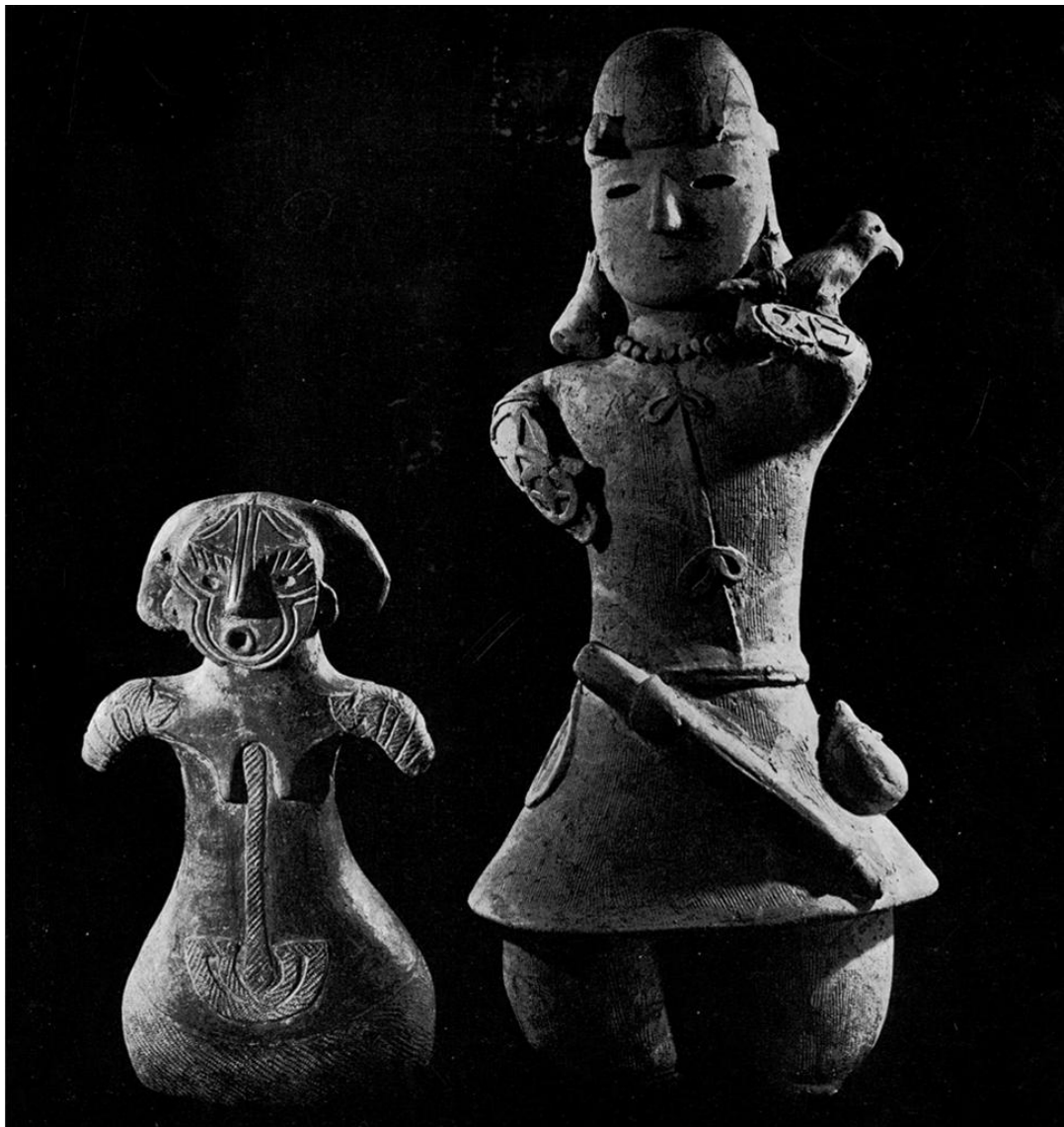
Figure. 4.5.



*Tower of the Sun* puncturing the Space Frame

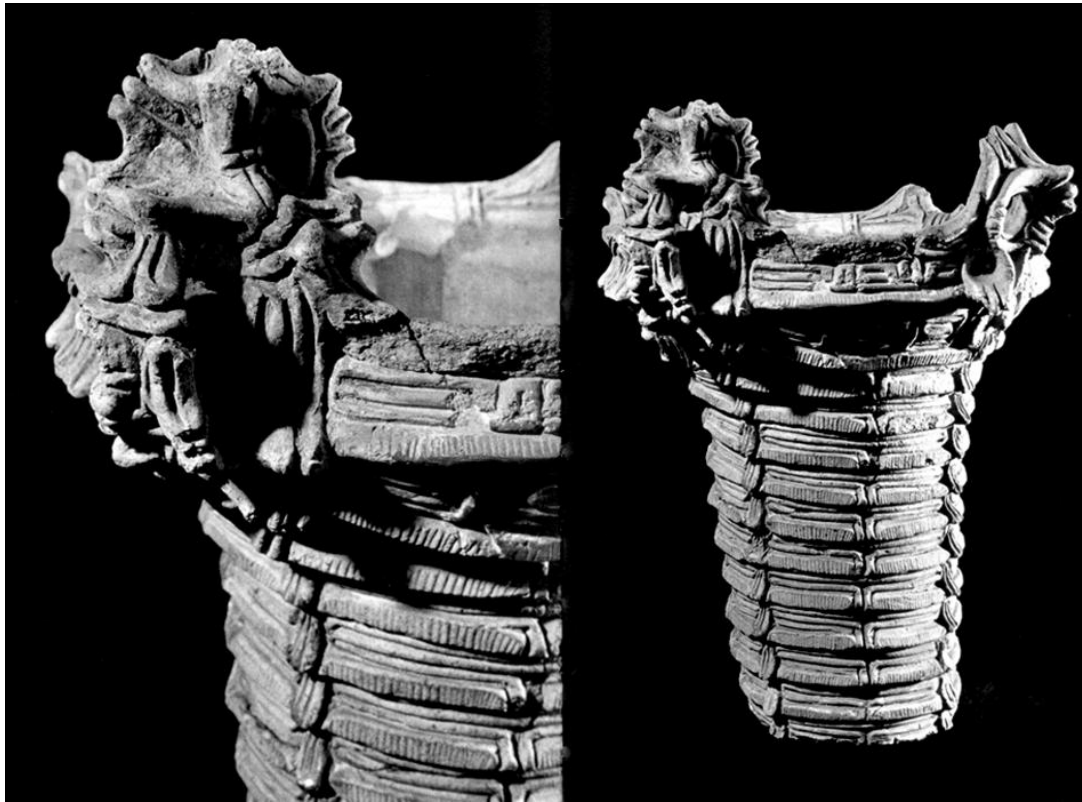


Figure. 4.6.



Jōmon (left) and Yayoi (right) figurines

Figure. 4.7.



Jōmon pottery photographed by Okamoto Taro (c.1952)

Figure. 4.8.



Okamoto Taro rising through the Space Frame (c.1968)



Figure. 4.9.



*Black Sun (back side of Tower of the Sun) facing Festival Plaza*

Figure. 4.10.



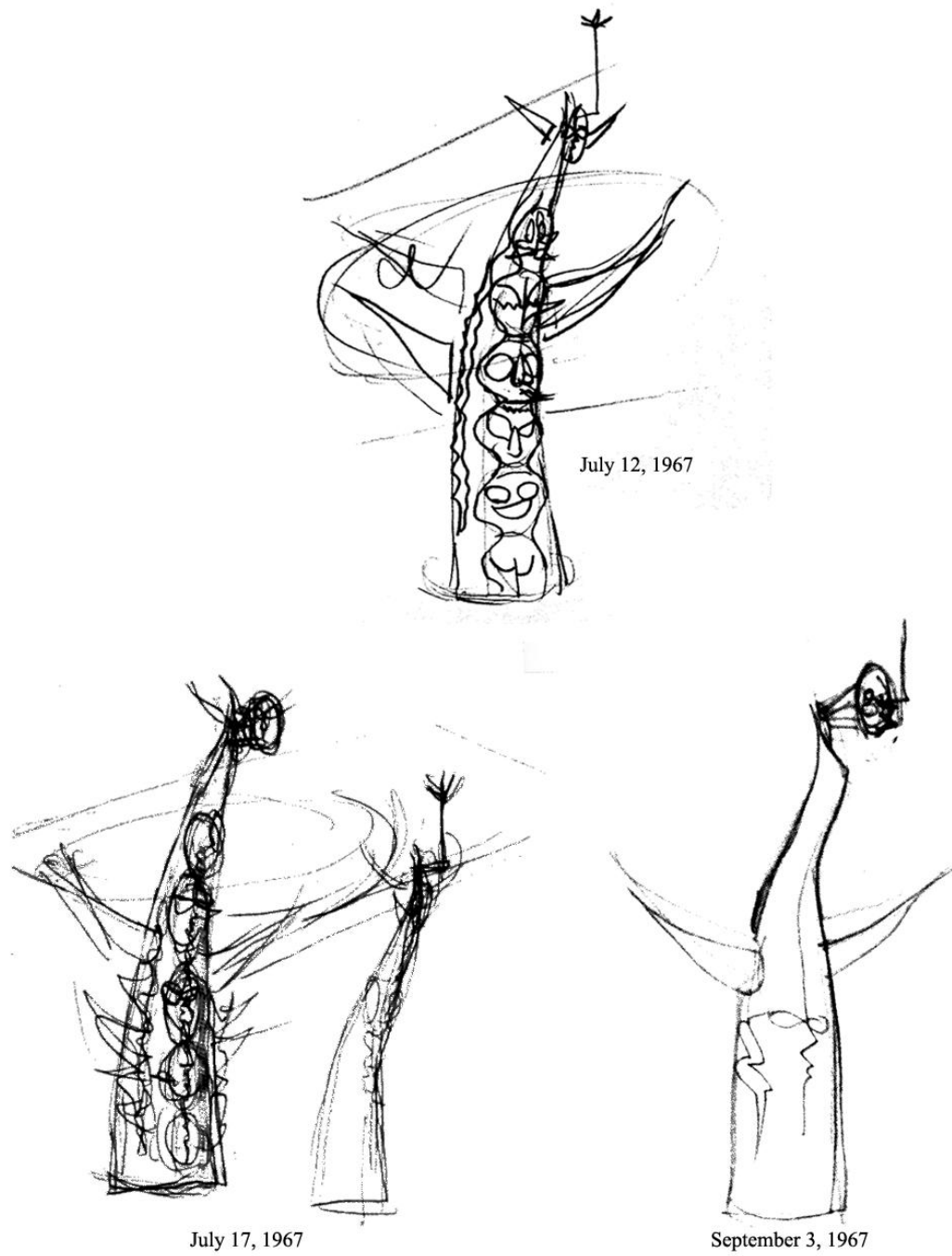
Pages from Okamoto Taro's photo album, at *Montreal Expo '67*, July 12 and 15, 1967

Figure. 4.11.



Page from Okamoto Taro's Photo Album, with Niki de St. Phelle sculptures at Montreal, July 16, 1967

Figure. 4.12.



Concept Drawings of *Tower of the Sun* by Okamoto Taro

Figure. 4.13.



Pages from Okamoto Taro's Photo Album, in Teotihuacan, July 20, 1967

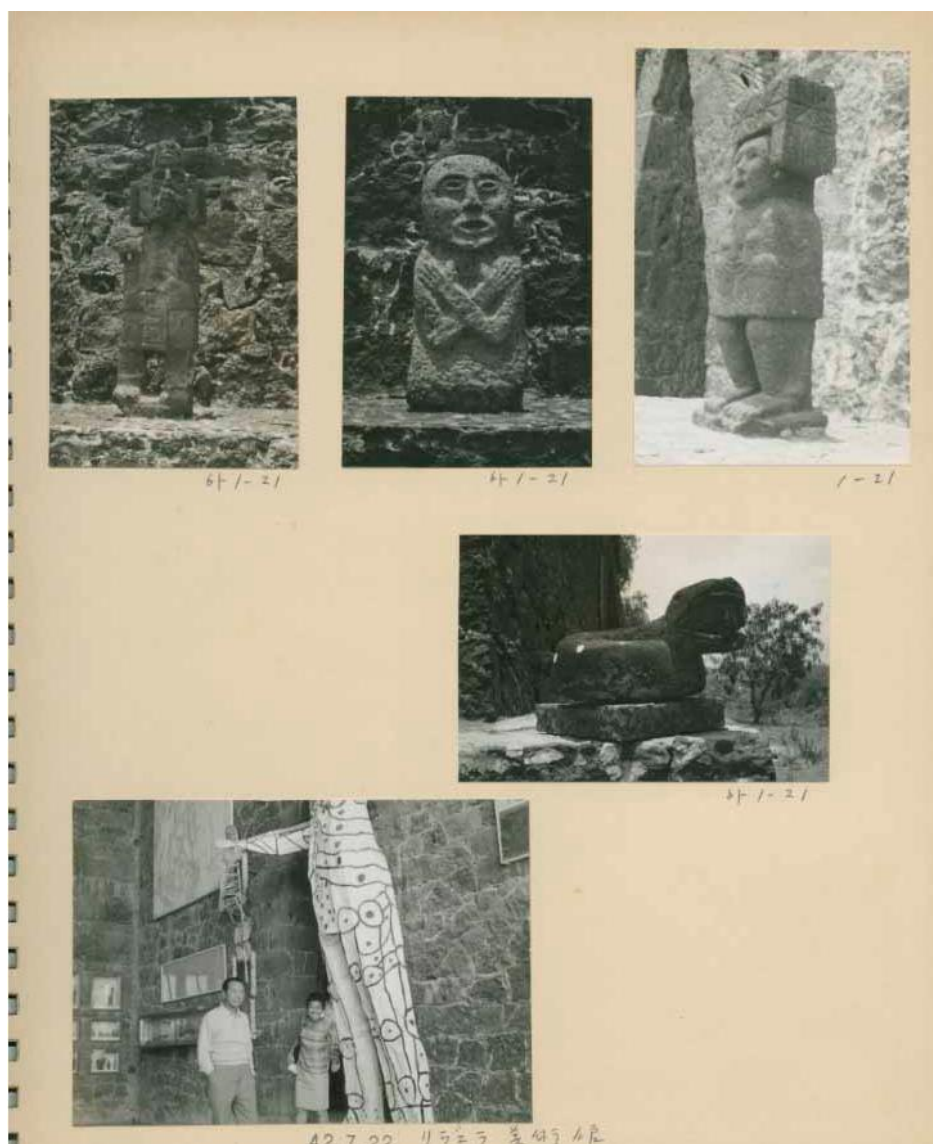


Figure. 4.14.



Page from Okamoto Taro's Photo Album, in Metepec, July 21, 1967

Figure. 4.15.



Page from Okamoto Taro's photo album, in Mexico City, July 22, 1967

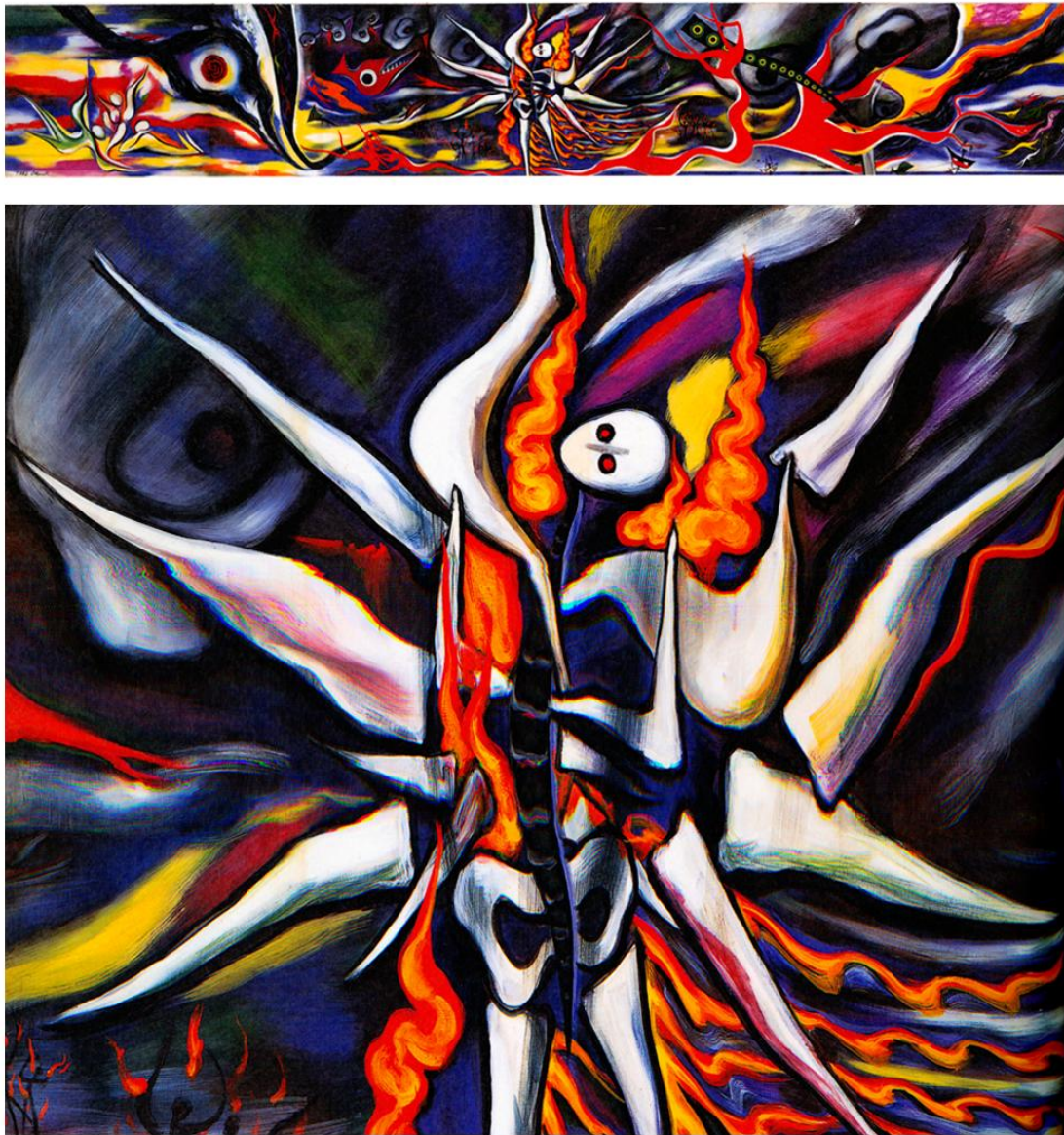
Figure. 4.16.



Page from Okamoto Taro's photo album, with David Alfaro Siqueiros in Mexico City,  
July 22, 1967



Figure. 4.17.



*Tomorrow's Mythology*, painting by Okamoto Taro (1968)  
(top: full view, bottom: details)

Figure. 4.18.



Page from Okamoto Taro's Photo Album, in Mexico City, July 22, 1967  
(Rivera's *Giant Male* relief mosaic at the National Autonomous University of Mexico)

Figure. 4.19.



Page from Okamoto Taro's Photo Album, in Monte Alban, July 29, 1967



Figure. 4.20.



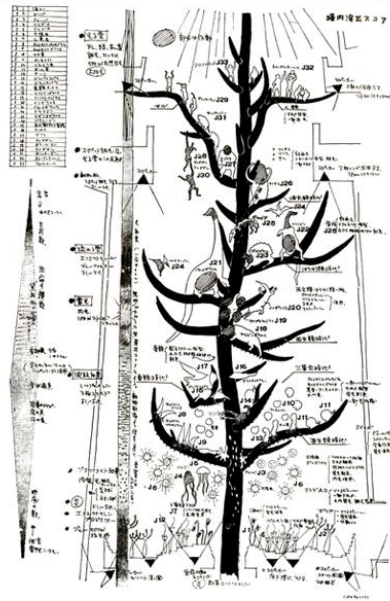
Page from Okamoto Taro's photo album, in Brasilia, August 24, 1967

Figure. 4.21.



Installation view of *The Past* in the basement of *Tower of the Sun*

Figure. 4.22.



Installation view of *The Tree of Life* inside of *Tower of the Sun* (top) and concept drawing (bottom)



Figure. 4.23.



Installation view of *The Future – World of Progress*, a subsection of the *Cosmic Space* exhibition

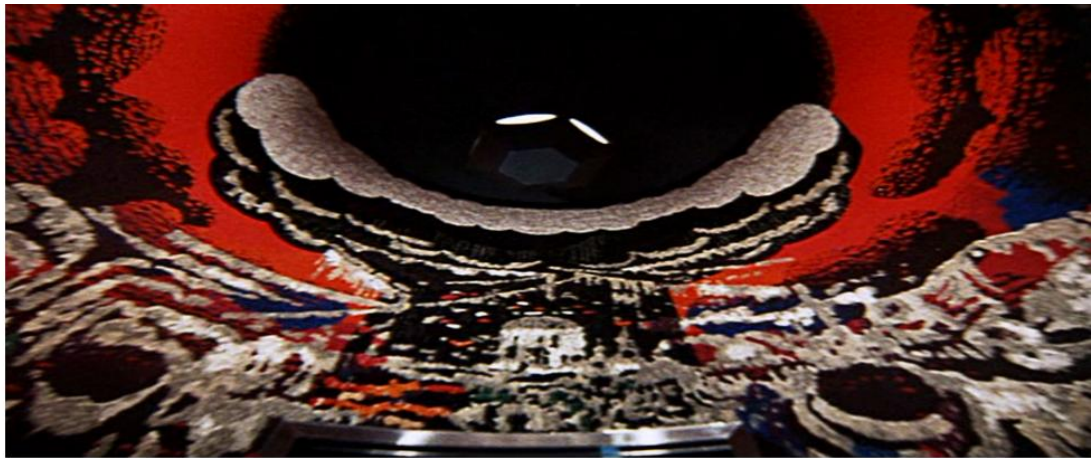
Figure. 4.24.



Installation view of *Wall of Contradiction* (top) and details (bottom)



Figure. 4.25.



Installation view of *Tower of Sadness* (top) in the Japan Pavilion in *Expo '70* and details (bottom)

Figure. 4.26.



*Mother Breastfeeding a Child*, photograph by Yosuke Yamahara (1945) in *Wall of Contradiction*

Figure 4.27.



Cover of the exhibition catalogue of *Anonymous People Who Support the World* (1970)

Figure. 4.28.



Installation view of *Anonymous People Who Support the World* (1970)

Figure. 4.29.



A page from the catalogue of *Anonymous People Who Support the World* (1970)

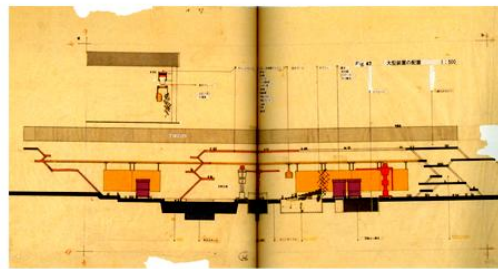


Figure. 4.30.



A page from the Canadian photography exhibition *The Camera as Witness* catalogue for Montreal Expo '67 (1967)

Figure 4.31.

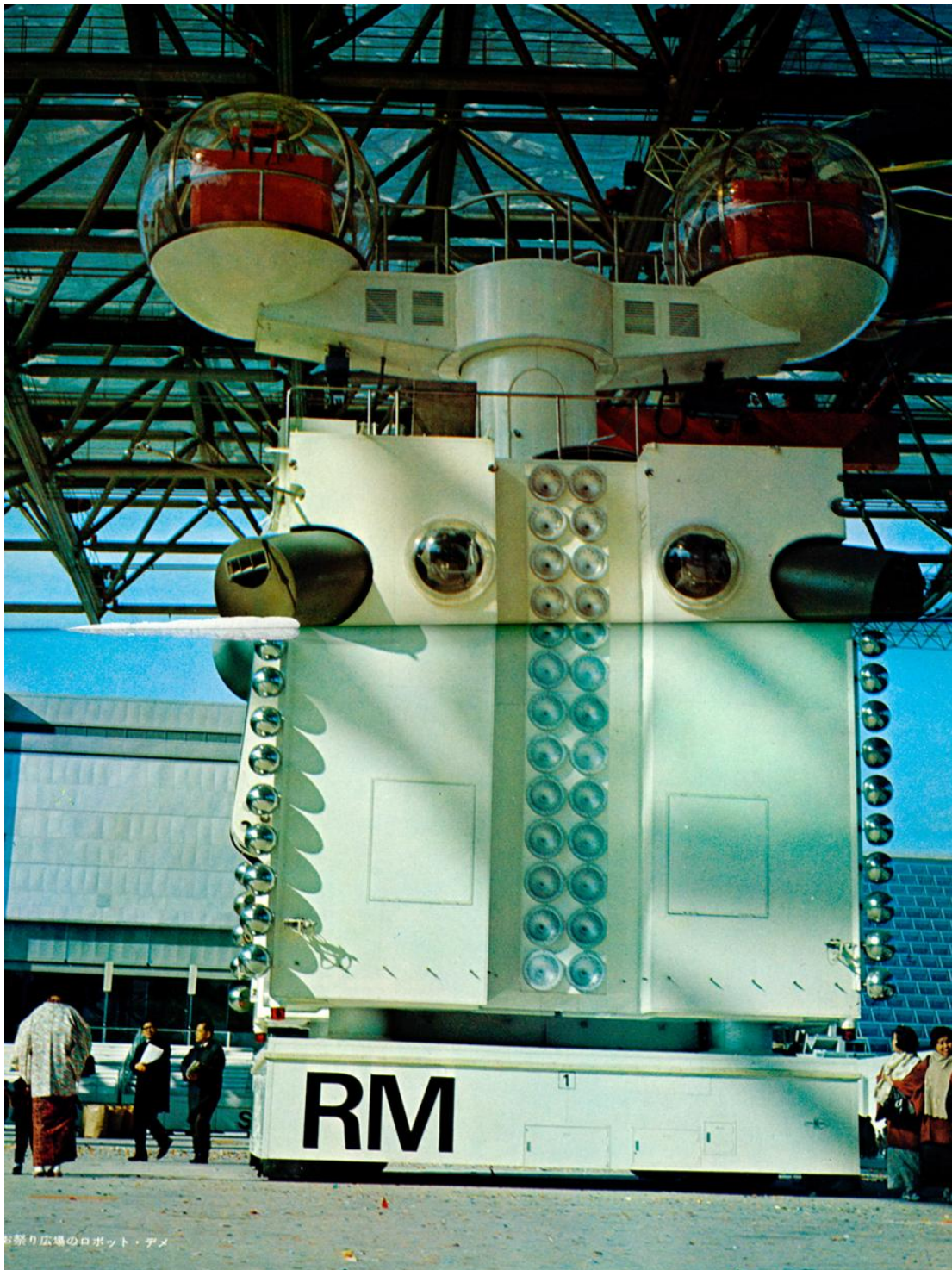


section digram by Arata Isozaki (c.1967)

*Festival Plaza in Expo '70 (1970)*



Figure 4.32.



The *Deme* robot designed by Isozaki Arata (1970)



Figure 4.33.



*Festival Plaza* program brochure for the week of May 20-25, 1970 (front and back)

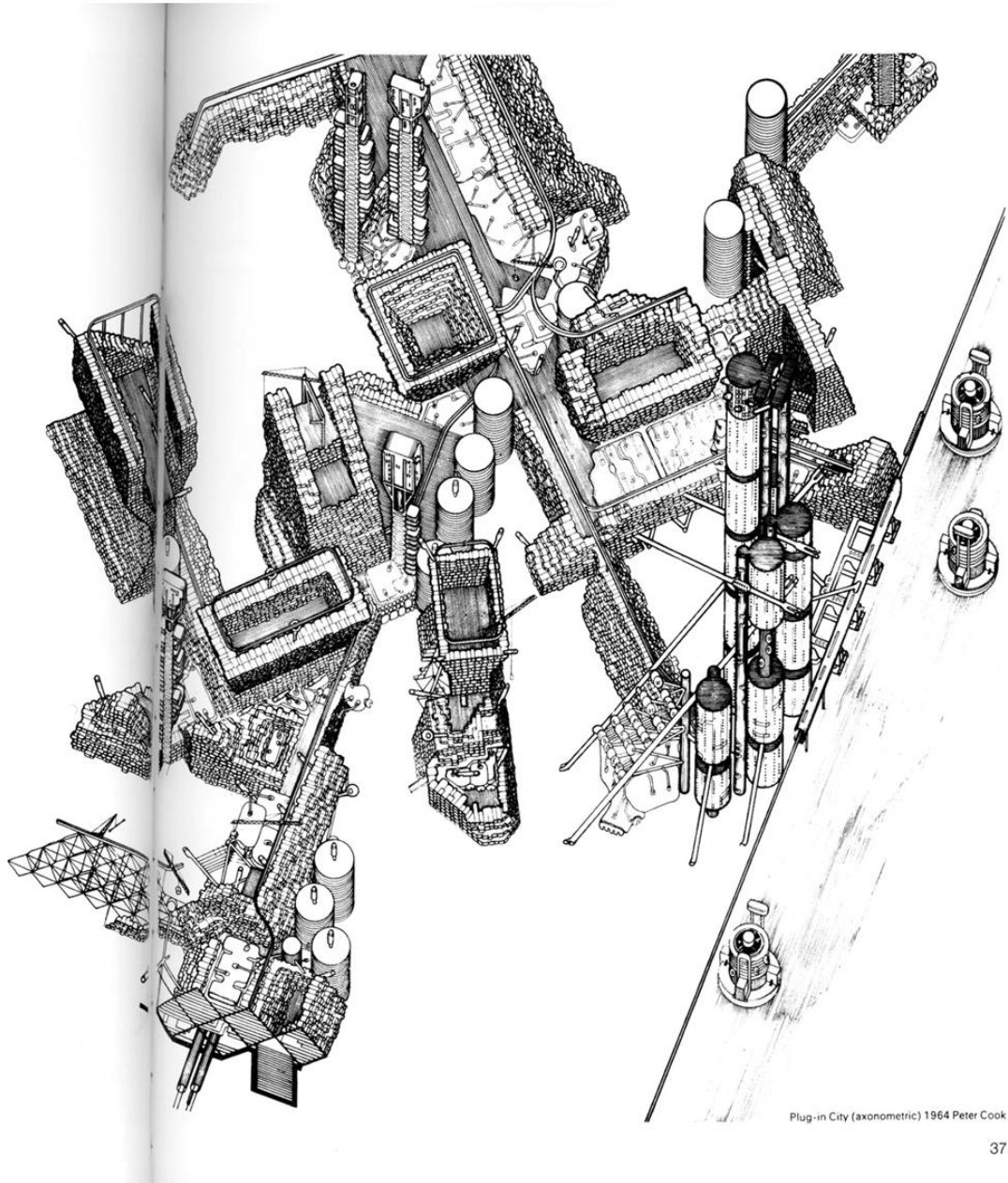
[illegible]

Figure. 4.35.



*Living City* exhibition by Archigram (1963)

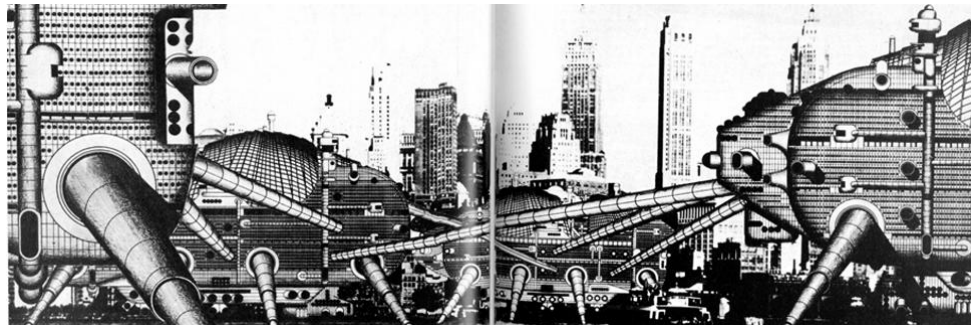
Figure. 4.36.



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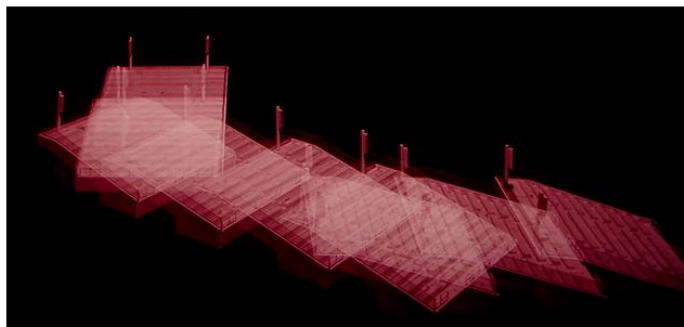
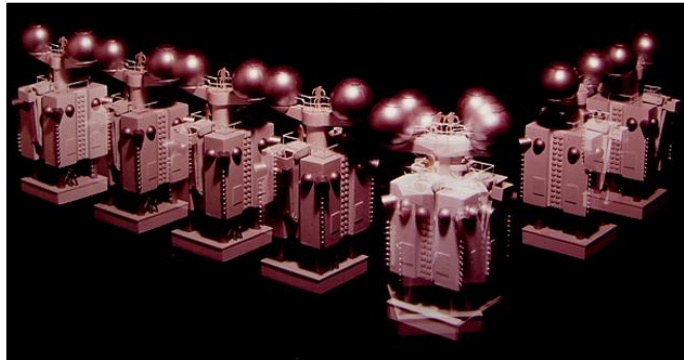
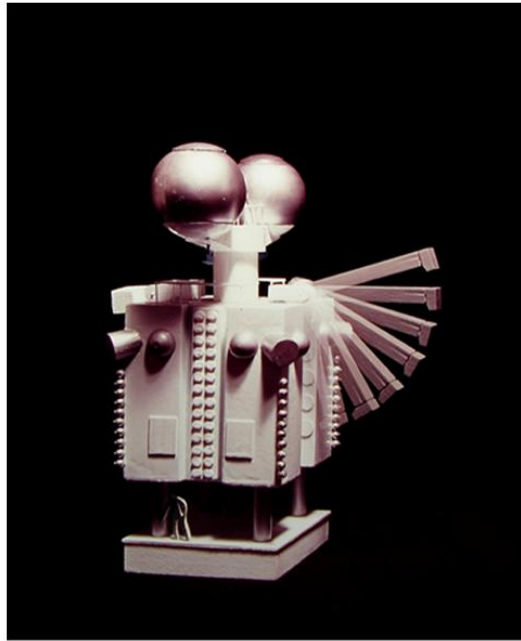
*Plug-in City* by Peter Cook (1964)

Figure. 4.37.



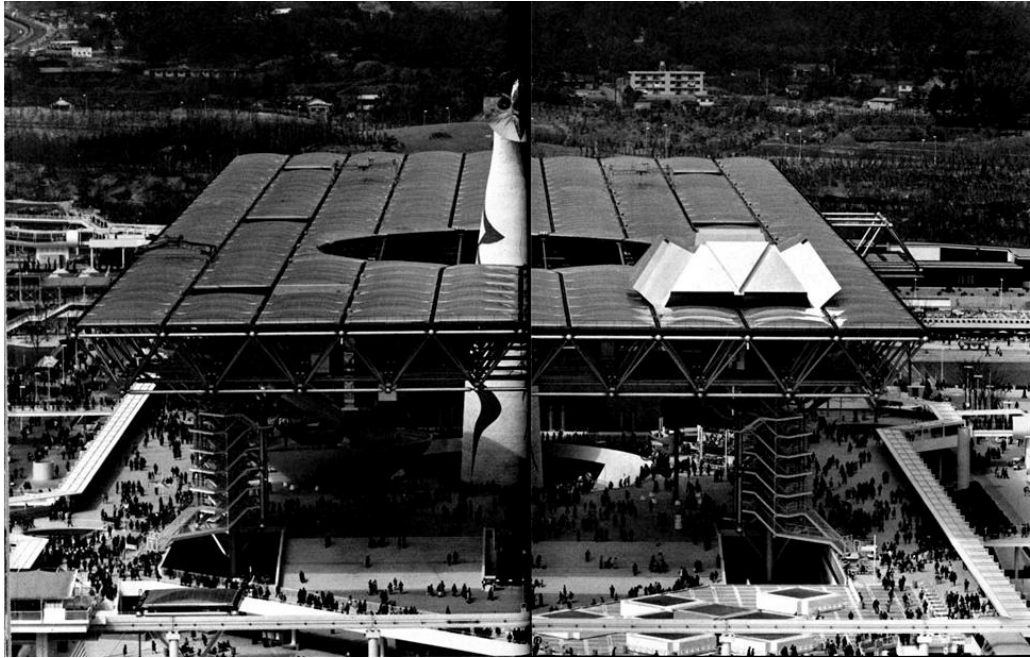
*Walking City* by Ron Herron (1968)

Figure. 4.38.



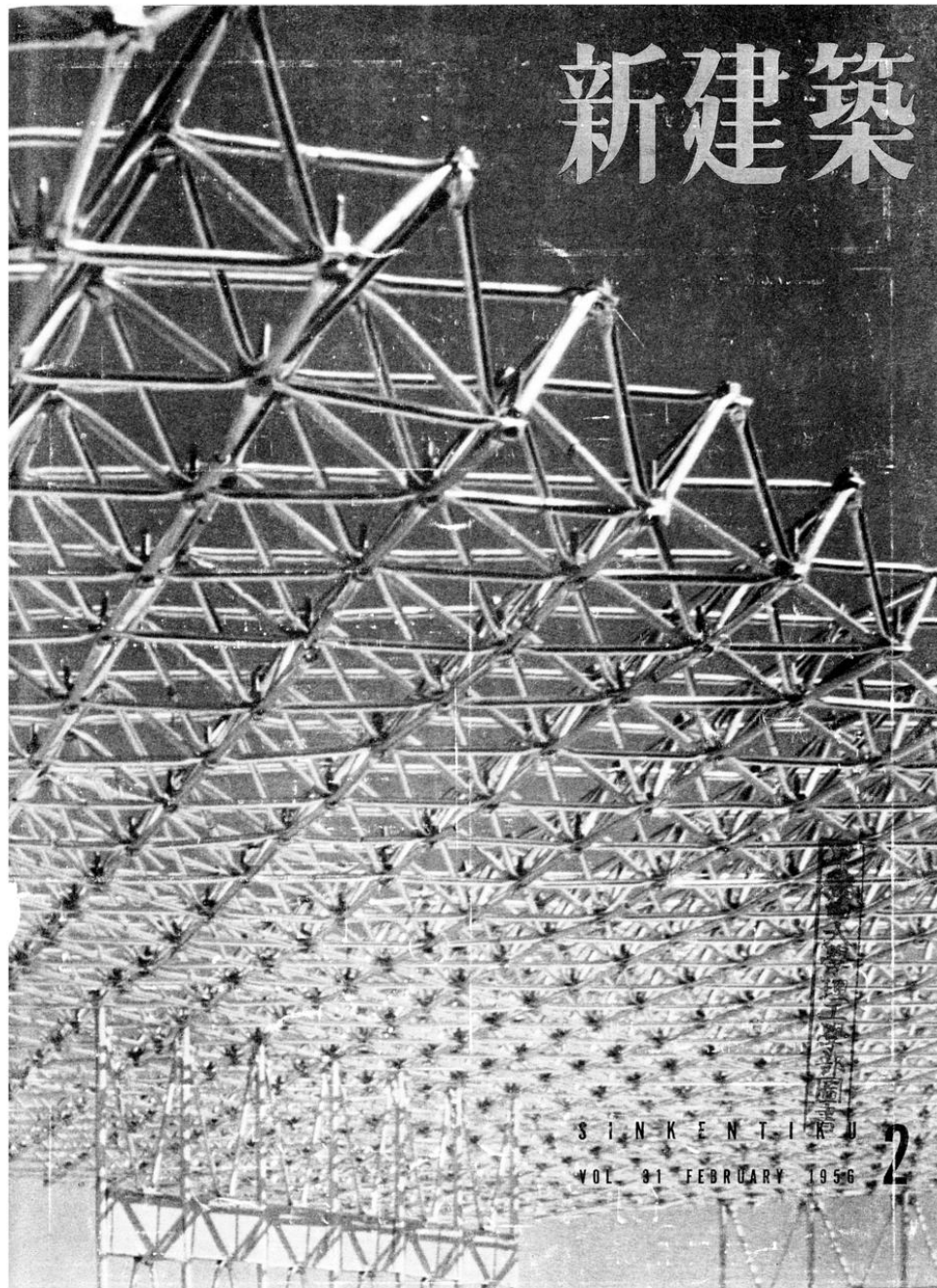
Photographs of *Deme 1*, *Deme 2*, and *Festival Plaza* by Kiyoji Otsuji (c.1968)

Figure. 4.39.



Space Frame (1970)

Figure. 4.40.



Front cover of *Shinkenchiku*, February 1956



Figure. 4.41.



*Venice of Monaco* drawing by Yona Friedman (1959)

## **Conclusion: Epilogue**

### **Visual Criticism of the Expo**

The Expo, made possible by the nation's advanced technology and accumulated capital, presented itself as a phantasmagoria, further advancing the nation's capitalistic, information, and photographic culture amid a time of high economic growth and urban development when Japanese society was shifting to late-stage capitalism. Indeed, the Expo constituted the last "spatio-temporal schema" in postwar Japan, enabling Japan to represent itself as a modern nation "by displacing the temporal onto the spatial and the spatial onto the temporal,"<sup>449</sup> in its orchestrated and systematic architectural and curatorial presentations of Japan's past, present and future. Images of the Expo flooded the nation in photographic publications, television programs, and film shorts. In turn, such visualization further attracted more visitors, accelerating the economy of the Expo, and furthering the scale and impact of the visual culture surrounding it. In response, there emerged a print-media-based discourse of criticism with regards to the Expo, often found in periodicals of an anti-authoritarian nature with relatively small circulations, including some of the journals discussed in the previous chapters. Several types of visual criticism can be observed in these publications, and they can be classified in at least the following two categories: avant-garde photographic, and text/image-based conceptual.

By way of concluding the dissertation, I will pay attention to the works of Tōmatsu Shōmei, Akasegawa Genpei, and Senda Mitsuru, all of which appeared in art journals and shared the nature of collage and montage. Looking at these complex works and other texts, I will examine if and how the artists cultivated their own senses of the time-space construct, modernity and the city in postwar Japan.

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<sup>449</sup> Sakai, Naoki, unpublished and undated manuscript, "New Keywords: Modern."

The first category is represented by photographer Tōmatsu Shōmei's photomontage (Figure 5.1) of a blurry, violent, and out-of-focus shot. It was based on a photograph he took as he faced the Expo's Festival Plaza (the subject of Chapter 4), and was superimposed with the image of a red, blood-like splash, as if the expo had been murdered. This image is significant at several levels. It is a color photograph, an experiment for the photographer whose work up to that point was predominantly black and white. (In Japan, as in the United States, color photography in the late sixties and early seventies was still seen only in the context of commercial advertising.) The splash and out-of-focus quality symbolize the photographer's critical attitude towards the expo, suggesting that it was an assault on the citizens of Japan and out of touch with the reality of their lives. In the photograph, titled "Nihon bankoku hakurankai <tēma> jinrui no shinpo to chōwa" (The World Expo in Japan: The theme of "Progress and Harmony for Mankind,"), Tōmatsu in effect executed the Expo. The photograph was featured, along with 23 others of his, in a 34-page-long photo-essay penned by Tōmatsu and titled, "Banpaku yarō" (That Bastard of an Expo), that appeared in the first issue of the short-lived journal of photography and criticism, *Ken*.<sup>450</sup> Tōmatsu worked many those photographs into a montage, using a previous image of his as a base, onto which he superimposed a variety of images, including out-of-focus photographs of the various Expo pavilions. These montages are satirical, subversive, and sometimes caricature-like, protesting against the politics and authorities of the Expo. The journal *Ken*, independently published by Shaken, a publisher established by Tōmatsu, would serve in its brief lifespan as the best example of the subjectivity of the anti-Expo discourse in Japan at that time, which constituted a network of small independent publications with a strong emphasis on photography. A few other journals with small circulations that similarly took an anti-Expo stance, notably the design

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<sup>450</sup> *Ken* was in print from 1970-71, and was issued only three times.

journal *Dezain hihyō* (Design Criticism) and a more mainstream publication, *Bijutsu techō*, joined *Ken* in echoing and multiplying their voices, visually and textually, regarding their doubts over the purposes of what seemed to them an excessively utopian exposition that sharply contradicted the reality of Japanese society. In this final section of the dissertation, I will discuss a few groups of works that focused on the Expo and appeared in these journals, forming part of the growing ripple effect of small, radical publications in the active publishing economy during the sixties and early seventies.

Artists of the early twentieth century European avant-garde (most notably, László Moholy-Nagy and El Lizzisky) had often adopted a strategy of photomontage and photo-collage in order to criticize the increasing industrialization and politicization of society, in the process using photography in ways that embraced technology. Likewise, Tōmatsu hailed a technique of photomontage that combined his earlier photographs and the images (such as a pavilion, or of Expo attendees) he had recently photographed at the Expo. In his essay, Tōmatsu characterized these photo-based works as “the extremely heated grudge and anger of *this* bastard [referring to Tōmatsu himself], who had experienced a strong rejection of the world expo.”<sup>451</sup> He lamented that the presence of too many images—70% of the expo’s exhibition contents were comprised of visual materials, television, film and photography—camouflaged the fundamental problems of Japanese society. He also charged that the overwhelming dominance of images projected on a large screen (known as “multimedia,” the emerging terminology at the time in Japan) throughout the Expo, even though some of them covered critical issues like war, poverty, the A-bomb, student protestors, and the housing shortage, did not, overall, amount to the critical message that even a single

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<sup>451</sup> Tōmatsu Shōmei, “Banpaku yarō” (That Bastard of an Expo), *Ken*, 1 (June 1970): 4-36.

black and white image could sometimes deliver. Indeed, he characterized “multimedia” as “the reality of a multifaceted ghost” at the Expo.<sup>452</sup> Calling the event “a competition of haunted mansions [of images],”<sup>453</sup> he declared that only a minute fraction of the vast number of its images addressed the important issues Japan was facing.

The first issue of *Ken* (June, 1970) was filled with essays by members of the cultural left, none of whom actively participated in the Expo. They included critic and photographer Taki Kōji, novelist Nosaka Akiyuki, novelist and art critic Shibusawa Tatsuhiko, film director Ōshima Nagisa, and art critic Hariu Ichirō. Also featured in the issue were writings and essays contributed by a radical, Osaka-based workers’ rights group (known as “Kamagasaki Kaihō Sensen”) and seventh graders from a junior high school near the Expo. As a whole, from its table of contents, the journal issue reveals its radical leftist nature and its grassroots quality. The issue’s clarity and criticality in its editorial direction unambiguously derive from the critical mass of Tōmatsu’s photography, which crowns the journal issue.

Tōmatsu’s criticality in image creation is based on the combination of his knowledge of the history of Japanese photography, his own sense of Japan’s hegemonic relations with the US (particularly in relation to Okinawa) in the postwar years, and his cynicism in charting the shift in Japanese society and politics from the war years to the postwar era. His preference to be an artist (as opposed to be a photographer in an isolated field of photography) in an interdisciplinary artistic and cultural milieu of the 1960s, which he refers to as *ekkyō no jidai* (the era of border transgression), enabled him to create a critical visual discourse through publications, like the collaborative journal *Ken*, that involved a wide range of writers and artists, and

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<sup>452</sup> Ibid., 4.

<sup>453</sup> Ibid.

his own photography books. For example, as a platform for the discourse, Shaken published a series of his photography books—including one on the US military presence in Okinawa, “Okinawa ni kichi ga aru no dewa naku kichi no naka ni Okinawa ga aru” (It is Not That There Are Military Bases in Okinawa, but That Okinawa Is within the Bases) (1968) and *Oh Shinjuku* (1970), a photobook that documents both the student demonstrations and the underground art scene in the Shinjuku section of downtown Tokyo—as well as the journal *Ken*.

The extremely clever, often witty and satirical, and critical nature of the works, together with their thought-provoking sequencing and juxtapositions by Tōmatsu, rank them as among the most incisive avant-garde photographic practice of postwar Japan. Equipped with an orientation toward documentary photography, Tōmatsu broke out of the preexisting tradition of academic and naturalistic documentary photographic practice, as represented in the works of photographers like Kimura Ihei and Domon Ken.

In the photo-essay in *Ken*, Tōmatsu begins with an image of the technology-driven, octagonal Pepsico pavilion, designed by members of the US-based art and science collective, Experiments in Art and Technology, superimposed over the blurred image of a US military aircraft, a B-52 bomber, flying in Okinawa. Titled “Pepsico Pavilion: The Theme of A Fence-less World and B52 Flying out of Okinawa” (Figure 5.2), the image conveys the contradictory duality of Japan in that it juxtaposed the utopian Expo pavilion against an American B-52, the very aircraft that had incessantly bombed Japan at the end of the war, and that still crowded the skies of Okinawa in 1970, the sovereignty of which still belonged to the US at that time. This image of the pavilion with the superimposed B-52 is juxtaposed against a close-up, frontal and straight shot of homeless workers in Osaka’s downtown Korean labor section, Kamagasaki (Figure 5.3). Next, images of anti-Anpo protestors and the Expo’s

student ushers are collaged in geometry, as if they were shown on multiple television screens, the single most popular presentation method at many of the Expo's pavilions. Tōmatsu's strategy to connect Japan's recent past to the Expo can also be seen in his collage of his well-known images of Nagasaki A-bomb victims with images of the Expo pavilions. Tōmatsu's already widely circulated photographs dealing with the nuclear aftermath of Nagasaki are recycled here: one is a portrait of a one-eyed blind girl whose affliction resulted from her mother's exposure to the A-bomb, juxtaposed against a huge, eye-shaped balloon, an advertisement for the technology company, Ricoh; the photograph is titled "Ricoh Pavilion: The Theme of an Even Better Eye for Humans and a Girl Who Lost an Eye Due to the Genetic Effects of Nuclear Radioactivity" (Figure 5.4). In the other photograph, the photographer's representative image of a pocket watch that stopped at 11:02 am on 9 August 1945 when the bomb was dropped in Nagasaki, was juxtaposed with that of two airplanes of the Japan Self Defense Force that had performed at the Expo's closing ceremony (Figure 5.5). These montages are further juxtaposed with the deformed image of a human body, and the images of a crowd that seems to be dislocated and lost because of the Expo's massive and inhumane scale. By superimposing two images that he himself had photographed, Tōmatsu doubled the two temporalities, two contradictory realities, and created one complex time-space construct.

In dramatic contrast with Tōmatsu's critical interpretation of the Expo are the photographs of the Expo site that had received the blessings of the Expo's organizing body. One of the official photography books of the event, titled *Structure, Space and Mankind: A Photographic Interpreter*, conveys a directly opposing image of the Expo, characterizing it as stark, pristine, modern, (techno-)utopian, progressive, and rational. The book consists of mostly black and white images, selected and edited by the authoritative Second Architectural Convention of Japan, and begins with a four-page

fold of a bird's-eye view of the Expo site. Here, with an effective grey tone, the Expo is shown as a dreamland over a group of new apartment complexes. The photograph reveals a group of architectural novelties on display at the Expo, flanked by the Constructivist USSR pavilion and Metabolist Kikutake's megastructure and prefabricated Expo tower. The book includes more than 200 photographs of canonical images of the Expo's built environments, including both close and distance shots, photographed at both day and night. The photographs' black and white quality adds an official and solemn tone, and all of the photographs are carefully designed, edited and selected to convey a sense of rationality, humanity, advancement, authority and prosperity. (Some photographs—like one of the two color photographs in the book, an evening image of the Festival Plaza, taken looking upward at the frame and towards the tower—convey a sense of wonder, awe and technological sublimity.) These photographs are presented in a manner consistent with the Expo's theme, "Progress and Harmony for Mankind." In most cases, the images were taken without people, or with only a few people, either aerially or from the ground level looking up, so that the architecture's monumentality and futuristic features are emphasized. For example, a frontal view of the space frame and the "Tower of the Sun" emphasizes the space's rigidity and spatial coherency (Figure 5.6). None of the images has the slightest appearance of kitsch or humor. Some other images are juxtaposed to indicate the continuity of forms throughout time, as seen in Figure 5.7. Importantly, the aerial photograph of the entire Expo (Figure 5.8) portrays the space as a well-planned city with infrastructures (i.e., highway and railway) in place, filled with utopian and prefabricated module buildings. These official photographs successfully encapsulated the official version of the Expo in a book format, as realized in the numerous temporary pavilions, as an event representative of "modernity," crowned as it was with the notions of harmony and progress, as amplified through photography.



Criticism against Expo '70 had emerged as early as 1968, when many of Japan's cultural left began viewing the Expo as the nation's device to camouflage its political instability and shut down the increasingly active civil movement surrounding the upcoming renewal of Anpo. To their minds, the Expo disguised Japan's focus on the regional development of Osaka and its vicinity.<sup>454</sup> Critic and photographer Taki Kōji characterized the expo as the best example of *chi no taihai*, the degeneration of intelligence, a debate over which class theory was revived, and which he saw as a matter of ideology.<sup>455</sup> Further, art critic Hariu Ichirō characterized the Expo as a ghost of the notorious concept, *hakkō ichiu* (meaning, all eight corners of the world under one roof)<sup>456</sup>, a war-time policy of fascist Japan whose supposedly divine mission was to bring, with the protection of *kami* (Shinto deities), all nations under one roof so that all of humanity could share the sovereignty of the Tennō (literally, “the heavenly sovereign”). The policy originally derives from a concept exploited by Emperor Jimmu in 660 CE, when he advocated that all of the world should be brought under the imperial rule of the divine emperors. As a matter of fact, under this concept, to many “hosting a world exposition was ‘the dream of the [Japanese] ethnic’ (*minzoku no*

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<sup>454</sup> Most recently, art critic Sawaragi Noi took the position that the Japanese government staged the Expo as a distraction to cover up the then on-going political instability caused by Japan's efforts to re-militarize itself, as manifested in its further renewal in 1970 of the US-Japan Security Treaty. Positioning the Expo as a legacy of imperial and colonial Japan, Sawaragi points out the weakness of the Expo in its complete disregard of significant social and political issues like the Cold War and world famine, and that the Expo exclusively focused on rosy aspects of the nation's future, mindlessly taking advantage of the technology and capital available at that time. Sawaragi Noi, *Sensō to Banpaku* (World wars and world fairs), (Tokyo: Bijutsu Shuppansha, 2005), 146-152. This analysis is clearly based on Hariu's analysis.

<sup>455</sup> Taki Kōji, “Chinō taihai” (The Degeneration of Intelligence), in *Ware ware ni totte banpaku to wa nanika* (What the Expo Is to Us), ed. Hariu Ichirō (Tokyo: Tabata Shoten, 1969), 53.

<sup>456</sup> Hariu Ichirō, “Minshu fuzai no saiten: saihen sareru taisei shihai no ronri” (A Festival without the Presence of the People: The Logic for Reorganized Control of the System)” in *Ware ware ni totte banpaku to wa nanika*, 17.

yume) for three generations since the Meiji era.”<sup>457</sup> Thus, the Expo, as an event promoted and subsidized by the nation, could not help but be interpreted as signifying a reversion to the fascist politics and ideology of prewar and wartime Japan.

Often the criticism and anti-Expo movement resorted to the power of visuals, including performance events. One of the more effective avant-garde artistic events staged for the effort was a five-day long series of performances, happenings, readings, and lectures that took place in April 1968 at the Sōgetsu Kaikan Hall, known for its avant-garde programs. Titled “Ekisupoze 1968 Shimpojiumu: nanika ittekure, ima sagasu” (Expose 1968 Symposium, Say Something to Me, I’ll Find [You/It] Now), the symposium, with the subtitle borrowed from a line from Samuel Beckett’s *Waiting for Godot*, consisted of numerous events, many with a psychedelic atmosphere created through the manipulation of sound and light, and involving artists, architects, poets, actors, and critics. The participants included architect Kurokawa Kishō, graphic designer Yokoo Tadanori, film director Hani Susumu, composer Ichiyanagi Toshi, novelist Tomioka Taeko, architect Isozaki Arata, painter Shinohara Ushio, and actor Kara Jūrō. The performative aspect of the symposium was paired with a poetry reading and a panel discussion. Included in the program were a psychedelic show, storytelling over a magic lantern, and poetry readings. Facing the Expo in two years, the participants collectively addressed their doubt over the national event as an artistic and cultural venue, and expressed their heightened sense of anxiety over politics and art brought about by the Expo, in addition to their desire to turn the expose into the start of a dialogue to search for new conditions for art in the post-Expo era.<sup>458</sup> The purpose

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<sup>457</sup> Ikeguchi Kotarō, “Nihon no bankoku hakurankai” (World Expositions in Japan) (Tokyo: Tōyō keizai shimbun sha, 1970), as quoted by Hariu Ichirō in *Ware ware ni totte banpaku towa nanika*, 15.

<sup>458</sup> *Dezain hihyō* (Design Criticism), special issue “Banpaku to Anpo, Expose, 1968 zen kiroku shūshū” (Expo to Anpo, Expose, 1968 All Records Included), 6 (July, 1968): 107-10.

of the symposium was to counter-present (against an organized and well-funded series of artistic events scheduled for the Expo) “a total environment of art,” both visual and textual, to highlight the tension between the upcoming Expo and the ongoing resistance over Anpo. The series of events indicated that the contemporary arts, *gendai geijutsu*, which were experiencing a drastic transformation at that time, were greatly fragmented, multilayered, and differentiated.<sup>459</sup>

Among the expose’s participants were the aforementioned art critic Hariu Ichirō, who formed the vanguard of Expo criticism, and the aforementioned photographer and critic Taki Kōji, who has continued over the decades since to express an anti-authoritarian stance. (Taki was part of the short-lived photographer collective “Provoke” (1968-69), which issued three issues of the periodical with the same title. The collective’s members’ blurry and out-of-focus images are well known but their lesser-known writings, including those by Taki, were more pertinent to the Expo criticism.<sup>460</sup>) In his essay, titled “Bunka no haikyo to shite no banpaku” (The Expo As Cultural Ruins), Hariu argues that, given the Expo’s complete exclusion of any elements of “the truth of the everyday” and “raw presence,” any future images presented there became weathered (and decayed) immediately.<sup>461</sup> To him, the Expo structures were a mere collection of *papier mache*. Commenting on the excessive number of moving images presented in the Expo, he asserted that a majority of the images were constructed with a certain (financial)]motivation, and failed to show “the aspect of a particular thing or the world beyond human consciousness” that even a

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<sup>459</sup> Ibid., 17.

<sup>460</sup> Taki produced a dozen essays related to the Expo and photography. The most notable ones include “Shashin to kankyō no shisō” (The Ideology of Photography and Environments) that appeared in the journal *Dezain hihyō* (Design Criticism), 3 (June 1967): 29-33.

<sup>461</sup> Hariu Ichirō, “*Bunka no haikyo to shite no banpaku*” (The Expo As Cultural Ruins) in *Ken*, 1 (June 1970): 111.

single black and white photograph can achieve.<sup>462</sup> To him, the Expo symbolized the government's ploy not only to deflect tension caused by the anti-Anpo movement and express fully its nationalism as a major power, but also to strengthen and reorganize the system of its economy and industries, create science and arts united by industry under the slogan of *jōhō kakumei*, or the information revolution, and unite and manage within the system a (national) ideology. Hariu criticized architects like Kurokawa Kishō on his Metabolism-era projects, which were realized at the Expo in the form of the pavilions he designed for commercial entities, like the Takara Beauty Pavilion and the Toshiba-IHI Pavilion. Essentially, Hariu accused Kurokawa of framing the projects as “avant-garde” (when indeed they were not) in order to fulfill his selfish desire to build under the Expo's ostentatious theme of harmony between technology and humans, fully supported by the national budget and private investments, for the sake of the quasi public property of the “future.”<sup>463</sup> More importantly, Hariu expressed his misgivings about the risk of a techno-information utopia being turned into a firmly controlled society based on the structure of technology.<sup>464</sup>

Taki's critique was focused more on a shift in the condition of modernity in Japan caused by the Expo. In one of his essays published in *Ken*, titled “Kindai no shūen” (The End of Modernity),” Taki argued that most of the architectural works found at the Expo were based on a methodology of a mere expression (which he calls “a fiction without any warranty”) toward alignment with the emergence of post-industrial society. He posited that those their expressions were thereby rendered uncertain, while the Space Frame by Tange (despite its borrowing of related historical designs and ideas for the frame) maintained an authentic modernist's established

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<sup>462</sup> Ibid.

<sup>463</sup> Ibid., 114.

<sup>464</sup> Ibid., 111.

expressions.<sup>465</sup> Taki further pointed out that the ideology behind the Expo was still a part of the values associated with modernity, and argued that the Expo itself, no matter how much it wanted to visualize aspects of the future through the use of technology, and no matter how much the Expo was at a remove from reality, would be still part of modernity.<sup>466</sup> He concluded his denunciation was suggesting both that the ideology behind the Expo, which made the Expo whole, be still heavily modern (not postmodern), and that the relationship between that ideology and the Expo was also applicable to that between the Expo as a whole and each of the designs of which it was comprised.<sup>467</sup>

Criticism also came from the architects who conceptualized or participated in the Expo. Asada Takashi, a senior staff architect at Tange's design office who conceptualized the collective Metabolism (as discussed in Chapter 2), was among those who initiated the idea of bringing the Expo to Osaka. In his 1970 essay, titled "Post Expo – Towards a Completely New Era: A Proposal for the Use of the Former Expo Site," he lamented the "unfortunate" direction the Expo had taken, and positioned the event as the end of the century that began with the Meiji era, when Japan assumed the values of what amounted to its European colonizers. Asada argued for Japan's need for fundamental reforms, in particular, via an "ecological revolution." Expressing his deep regret over the Expo's focus on materiality, Asada addressed the need to generate an overall program to utilize the former Expo site. His essay revealed that hardly any organized use of the site after the Expo had been discussed. Asada lamented the Expo's shortsightedness, declared an imminent need to conceptualize the totality of the environment of the site following the Expo, and argued for the

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<sup>465</sup> Taki Kōji, "Kindai no shūen" (The End of Modernity), in *Ken*, 69.

<sup>466</sup> *Ibid.*, 68-9.

<sup>467</sup> *Ibid.*

involvement of local residents in the decision-making over the use of the site.<sup>468</sup>

The Expo, that is to say, the site as well as the built environments, was once expected to be an archetype of the city for the architects and artists who had experienced the end of the war twenty-five years earlier. For many of them, the Expo was supposed to become an occasion where their imaginations would finally take form. However, to the contrary, the Expo often turned out to be nothing more than a hollow corpse of their imaginations. Even before the Expo period would end in September 1970, a number of discussions arose as to how to salvage the site. The end of the Expo meant to many of them the end of Japan's modern era, as these cultural and artistic practitioners were facing the upturn of postmodernism.

This spirit and practice of Japan's avant-garde art at the end of the 1960s revealed itself in a one-page print, a conceptual work that incorporates written words, by conceptual artist Akasegawa Genpei. The July 1970 special issue of *Bijutsu techō*, titled "Expo '70 Mankind and Civilization" (Figure 5.9) included not only the essays of Asada and others, but also the visual proposals for use of the Expo site after the Expo. Most notable among these visual proposals were those by Akasegawa and industrial designer Senda Mitsuru. Akasegawa Genpei (a close friend of Isozaki because of their involvement in the early years of the avant-garde collective, Neo Dada Organizers; both were from Ōita City in Southern Japan, as discussed in Chapter 3) proposed to recreate an identical Expo in his work (Figure 5.10), using six identical, readymade images of the aerial photograph of the Expo site.<sup>469</sup> In this work, he takes

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<sup>468</sup> Asada Takashi, "Banpaku atochi riyō no teian: posuto banpaku – mattaku atarashii jidai e" (Proposal for the Usage of the Former Expo Site: Post-Expo—Towards a Completely New Era), special issue "Expo'70 ningen to bunmei" (Expo '70 Mankind and Civilization), *Bijutsu techō*, 330 (July 1970): 1-6.

<sup>469</sup> Akasegawa Genpei, "Bankoku haku atochi riyō no teian" (Proposal for the Usage of the Former Expo Site), *Bijutsu techō*, 14.

the combined strategy of Duchampian conceptualism, utilizing a found image and adding his own short text, and Minimalism, simply repeating the identical image six times. The text he chose, “*bankokuhaku atochi riyō no keikaku*” (meaning, a proposal for use of the former Expo site), proposes that the site be exactly recreated for another Expo. It includes the caption three times, “*banpaku tekkyo no atochi ni banpaku o kenzō suru*” (to create an Expo at the former Expo site), and in a larger font at the bottom of the work, “*Ijō Anpo kaitei no tabi ni okonau*” (Repeat [the construction] with every renewal of Anpo).<sup>470</sup>

A lesser-known project by Architect Senda Mitsuru was a blurry photomontage of the Symbol Zone (Figure 5.11), in which both the tower and the frame have collapsed to now resemble a drawing of the Roman ruins by Piranesi.<sup>471</sup> Here, Senda obviously takes the earlier strategy by Isozaki of photomontage, but he goes even further with the strategy to visualize the active destruction of the Expo. With the drawing, in the text, titled “A Proposal for the Usage of the Former Expo Site: Construction of a True Future Play City = Terre Ludens,” arguably inspired by the writings of Johan Huizinga, particularly his game theory, Senda suggests the following five methods to create the park named *teru rudensu* after the Expo. They are (1) complexly burning the entire Expo, without moving or preserving any facility; (2) completely destroying the Expo, except for an approach to the Expo and a parking space; (3) additionally destroying the Expo Central Train Station to ruins; (4) letting Nature take care of the burnt field; and (5) circling the site with a 100 meter band of forest. For the proposal (1) above, he suggests five methods: (a) by gasoline, (b) by land mine; (c) by aerial bombing; (d) by combat practice; and (e) by loaning the site

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<sup>470</sup> Ibid.

<sup>471</sup> Senda Mitsuru, “*Bankoku haku atochi riyō no teian: shin no mirai yūgi toshi = teru rudensu = no kensetsu*” (A Proposal for the Usage of the Former Expo Site: Construction of a True Future Play City = Terre Ludens), *Bijutsu techō*, 15-7.

for a war movie production.<sup>472</sup> He then proposes to create a true future city, a city of sentimentalism and sensitivity. Illustrating his methodology with a photograph of *yakeato* (Figure 5.12), he suggests turning the site from the burnt ruins ultimately to a sand garden where both the young and the old can touch the sand and play from the bottom of their hearts.<sup>473</sup> To many artists, including Senda, the post-Expo future city would turn into *yakeato*, after twenty-five years of imagination and creation, where they could again start building a city from scratch.

It was the Metabolists, in the 1960s, who dreamed the dream of machine dynamism, as if the Futurists had re-emerged. Around that time, beneath the shining capsule tree that the Metabolists built, architect Ishiyama Osamu was among those who gathered up trash-like parts, dropped from the capsule as if an over-ripe piece of fruit had fallen.<sup>474</sup>

--Itō Toyo

The epigraph above, in the words of architect Itō Toyo, represents a sentiment shared by many architects and artists during the 1970s after the Expo. Technology-driven futurism, as represented in the unbuilt designs by the architecture collective, Metabolism, began to gradually decline, partially due to the economic crisis in Japan caused by the oil shock in 1973, and partially due to the disillusionment associated with the search for an archetype of the city, the ideal city, after the experiences undergone by the architects and artists in the Expo. A few utopian megastructures were realized during the 1970s, such as Kurokawa's Nakagin Capsule Tower (1972) in downtown Tokyo, and Kikutake Kiyonori's Aquapolis (1975), a mega floating pavilion for International Ocean Expo '75, held in Okinawa, Japan. Generally speaking, however, during the 1970s, the practice of imagining an archetype of the city went into hiatus. Few notable visionary collaborative works that incorporate the imaginary use

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<sup>472</sup> Ibid.

<sup>473</sup> Ibid.

<sup>474</sup> Yatsuka and Yoshimatsu, 270.



of photography, and that seek an archetype of the city, were realized. In this context, Itō's reference to architect Ishiyama Osamu (b. 1944) is of particular interest as it indicates minute but important continuity in the avant-garde collaborative practice discussed in the dissertation. For example, Ishiyama developed a design practice focusing on smaller human-scale structures, attempting to use both everyday vernacular materials that were locally procured, and Japanese premodern building techniques, an approach that was viewed as antithetical to the techno-utopian architecture practice exemplified by Metabolism. His designs often solicited physical participation in the construction process by the very people who commissioned him to build architecture, thus incorporating collaboration into the required process of creation.

Retrospectively, the Japan World Expo '70 served as a rupture, at the very moment when modernism was giving itself in to postmodernism, and it triggered a fundamental change in the nature of the Japanese state. As Isozaki Arata has pointed out, during the 1970s Japan began to be “managed on the basis of commercial theories and had fewer opportunities to express its own will clearly.”<sup>475</sup> To him, the state of Japan withered away as Japanese governmental and business sectors merged to further their respective economic opportunities (as seen in the Expo). During this shift, the artistic and utopian desires and anxieties shared by many of the protagonists discussed in this dissertation evaporated, and, the nature of any projects they undertook shifted from the avant-garde to the commercial. Instead of collaborating to create a project with an avant-garde orientation that would challenge preexisting notions of tradition, they began, often individually, to seek out (and realize) highly funded projects. Thus, for example, an architect might seek out a commission to design a prefectural museum

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<sup>475</sup> Isozaki Arata, “Of City, Nation, and Style,” in *Postmodernism and Japan*, ed. Masao Miyoshi, and H.D. Harootunian (Durham, N.C.: Duke UP), 52 and 55.

with a large budget, while an artist might aspire to create high-priced artwork intended to be housed in such a museum. Meanwhile, Tokyo and other cities that had been decimated, a quarter-century earlier, continued to grow as their populations increased. Numerous new buildings were constructed, but some neighborhoods were left untouched while some reverted back to a chaotic state not too different from the way they had appeared in 1945. By the end of the 1970s, there were no more notable collaborative avant-garde efforts to imagine an archetype of the city.

As seen in the various case studies discussed throughout the dissertation, during Japan's politically and socially turbulent period between 1953 and 1970, printed visual materials, in particular photographs, and visual apparatuses (i.e., cameras) were amply available as a result of the active economy. The height of Japan's *kōdo keizai seichō*, or the era of the rapid growth of the Japanese economy, had begun in 1960 and continued for the following ten years. The newly circulating visual materials and apparatuses played a vital role in inspiring and enabling architects and artists—who had witnessed completely destroyed Japanese cities at the end of World War II—to imagine and project their own visions of a desirable modern urban space. As seen in Tōmatsu's photomontages and Akasegawa's use of a readymade image of the Expo in his conceptual work, as well as Tange's construction of modern space through Ishimoto's photographs of the premodern Katsura architecture and other case studies discussed throughout the dissertation, I have demonstrated that photography constituted a major apparatus, both physically and conceptually, that suggested not only a potential capacity to construct ideal spatiality and temporality but also the limit of the modern disciplines in such a construction, given the socio-political complexities of the time. Because of the medium's democratic characteristics (i.e., availability, elasticity and flexibility), the protagonists in the dissertation found photographs that others had created, and utilized them freely, amply, and creatively. By cropping,

cutting, stretching, collaging, drawing on, or simply snapping photographs, the selected architects and artists discussed in the dissertation articulated the image of a future city, choosing to work in a wide range of collaborative formats in their attempts to challenge pre-existing notions of tradition and visualize a modernity specific to post-1945 Japan.

Figure. 5.1.



Tōmatsu Shōmei, "Untitled" (1970)

Figure. 5.2.



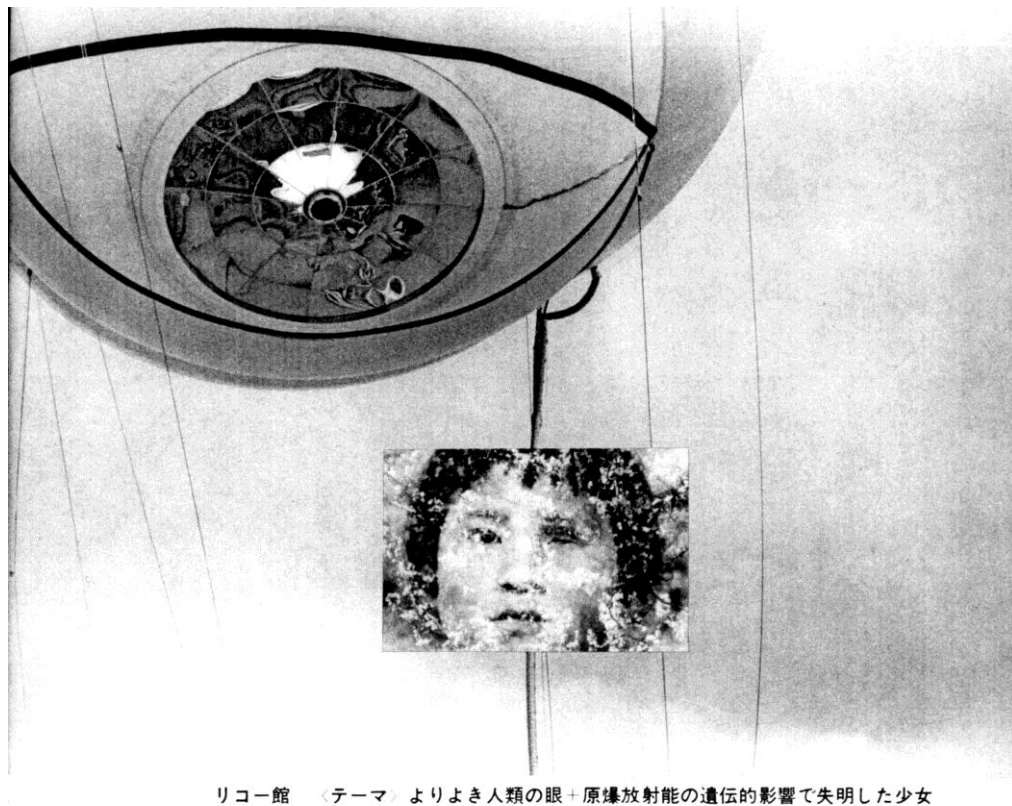
Tōmatsu Shōmei  
“Pepsico pavilion <theme> fence-less world and B52 flying out of Okinawa” (1970)

Figure. 5.3.



Tōmatsu Shōmei “Osaka, Kamagasaki” (1970)

Figure. 5.4.

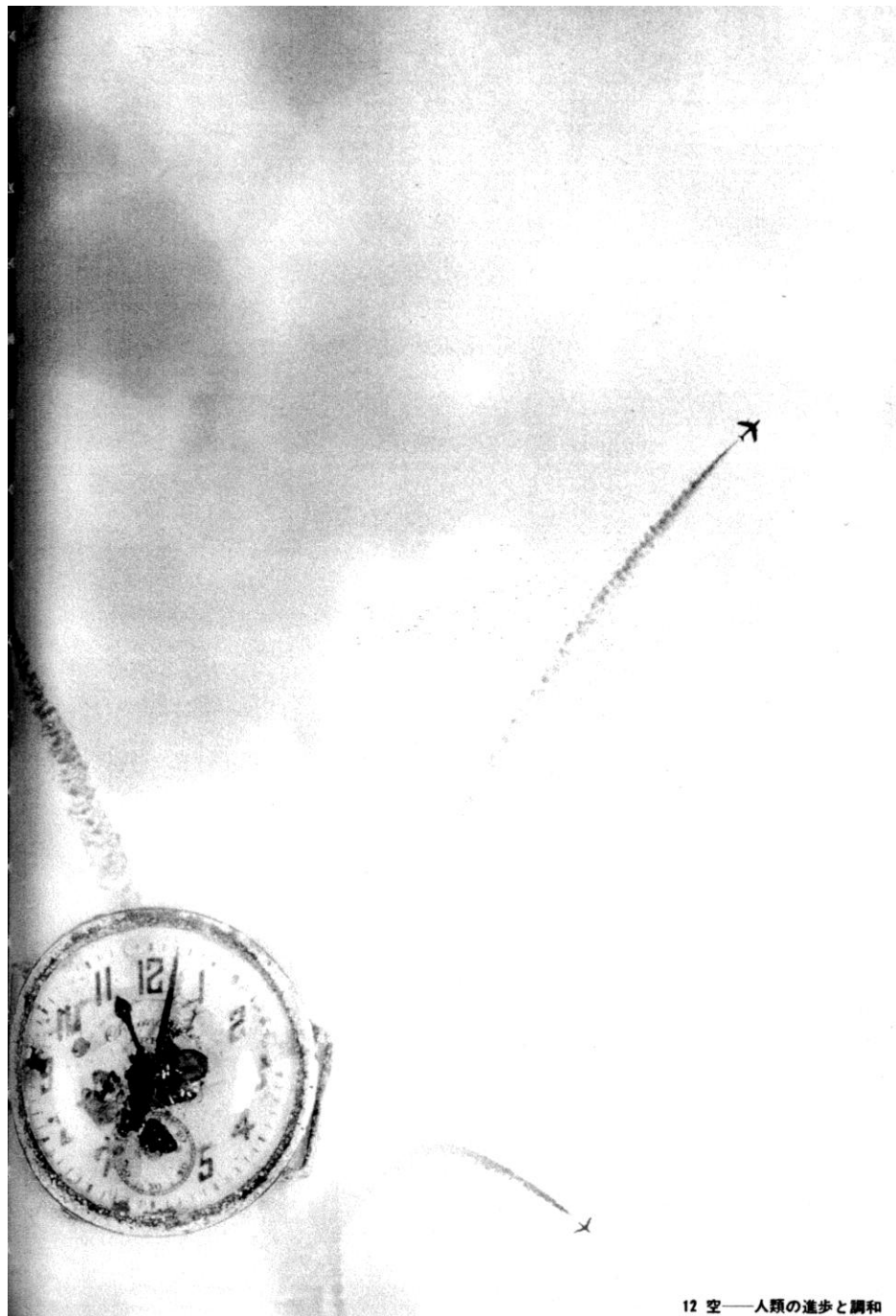


リコー館 〈テーマ〉よりよき人類の眼+原爆放射能の遺伝的影響で失明した少女

Tōmatsu Shōmei

“Ricoh Pavilion <theme> an even better eye for humans and a girl who lost an eye due to the genetic effects of nuclear radioactivity” (1970)

Figure. 5.5.

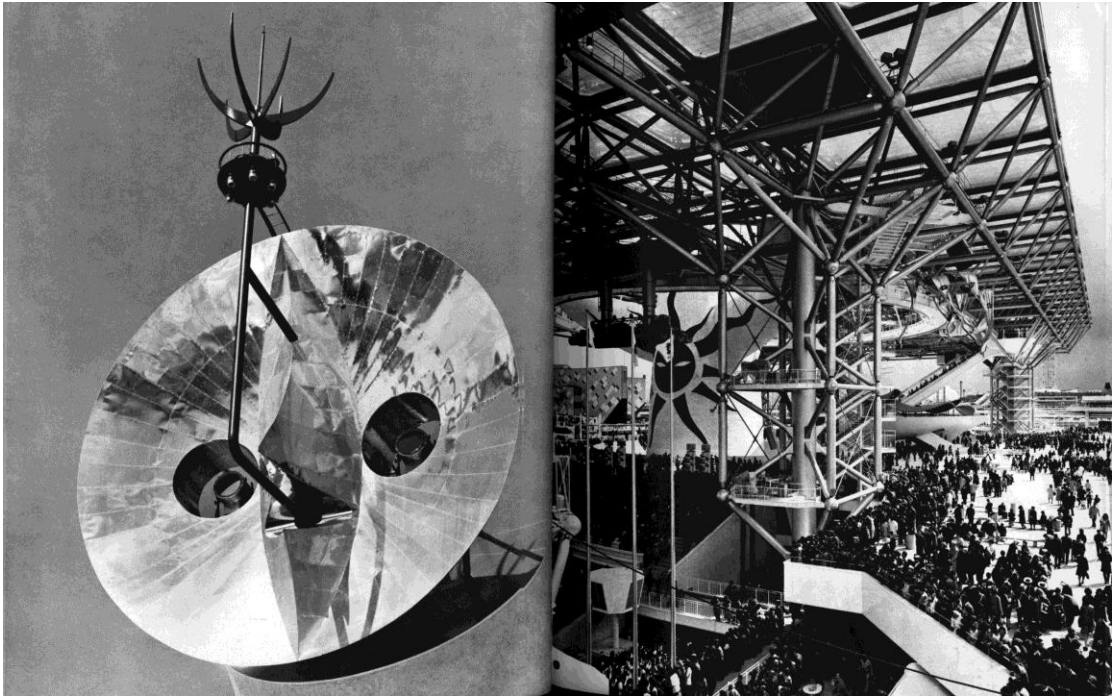


12 空——人類の進歩と調和

Tōmatsu Shōmei  
“Sora -- Jinrui no Shinpo to Chōwa”

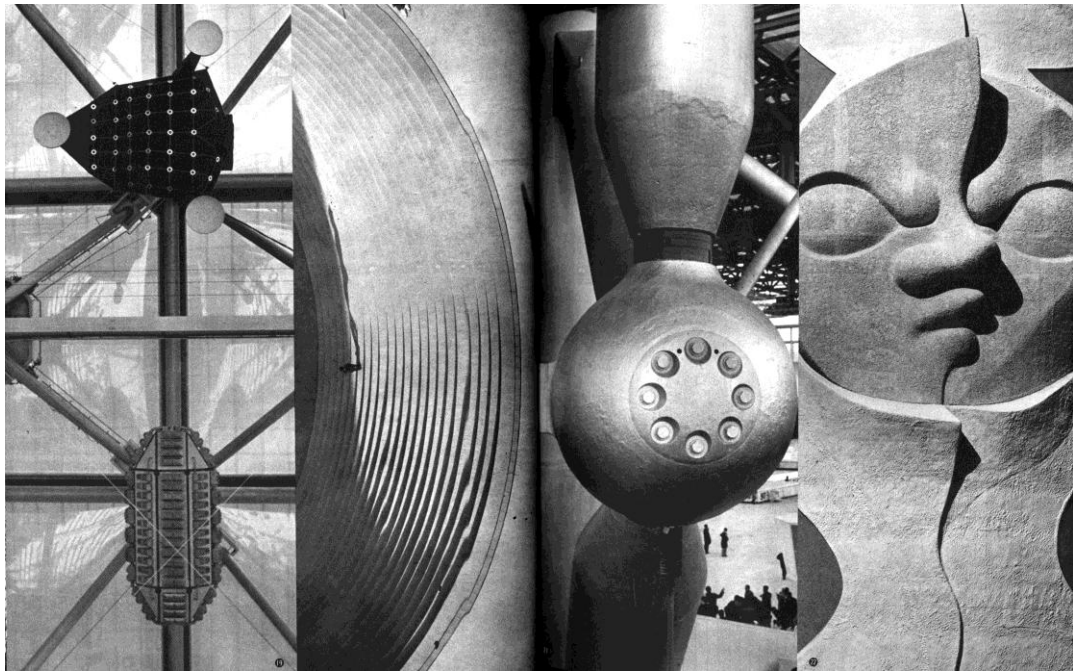


Figure. 5.6.



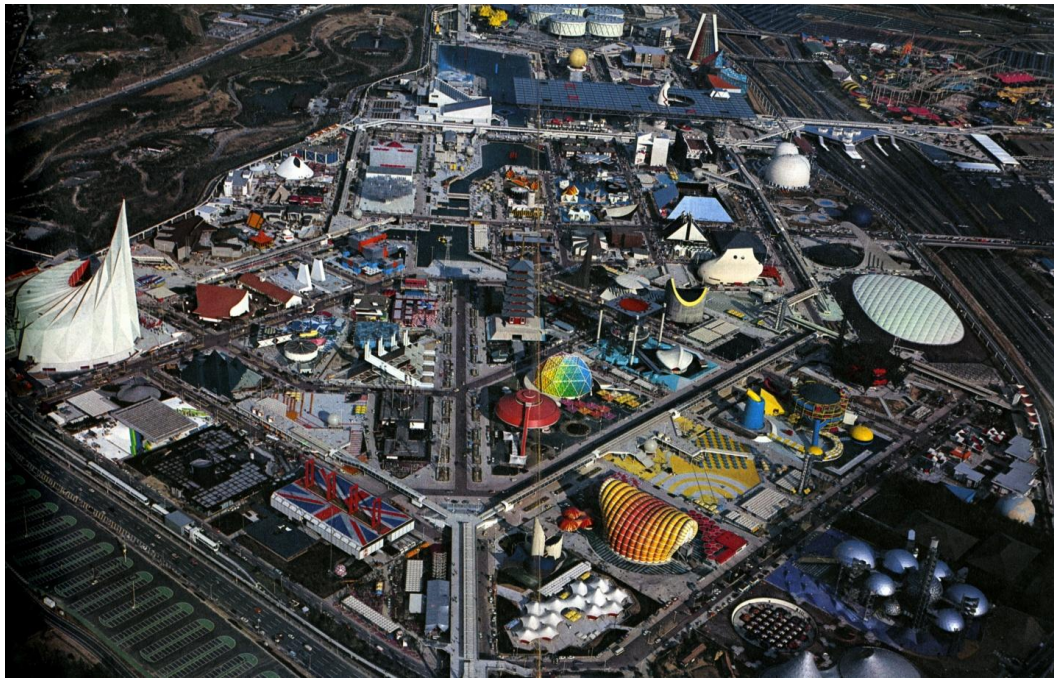
From *Structure, Space and Mankind: A Photographic Interpreter*

Figure. 5.7.



From *Structure, Space and Mankind: A Photographic Interpreter*

Figure. 5.8.



From *Structure, Space and Mankind: A Photographic Interpreter*

Figure. 5.9.

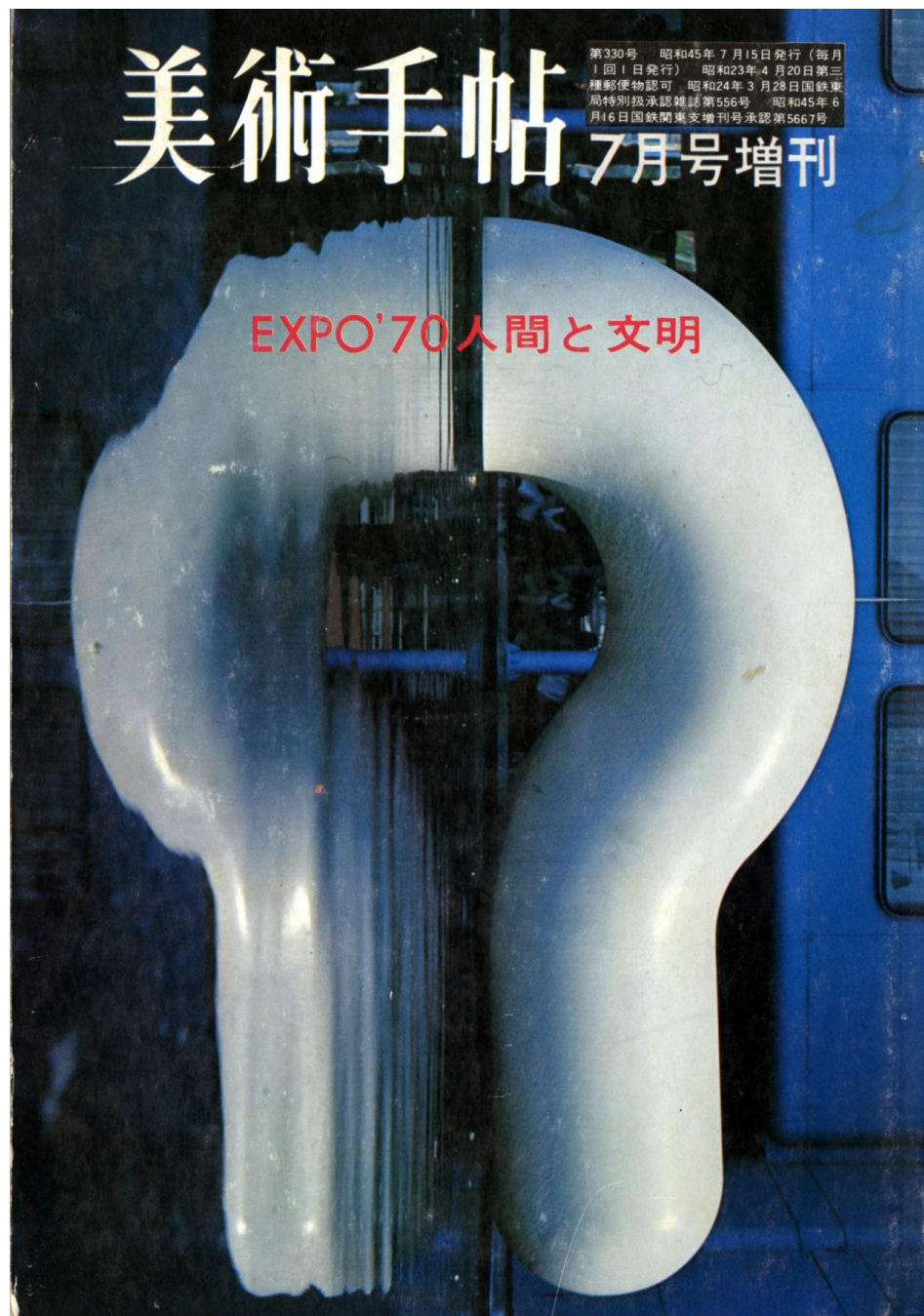
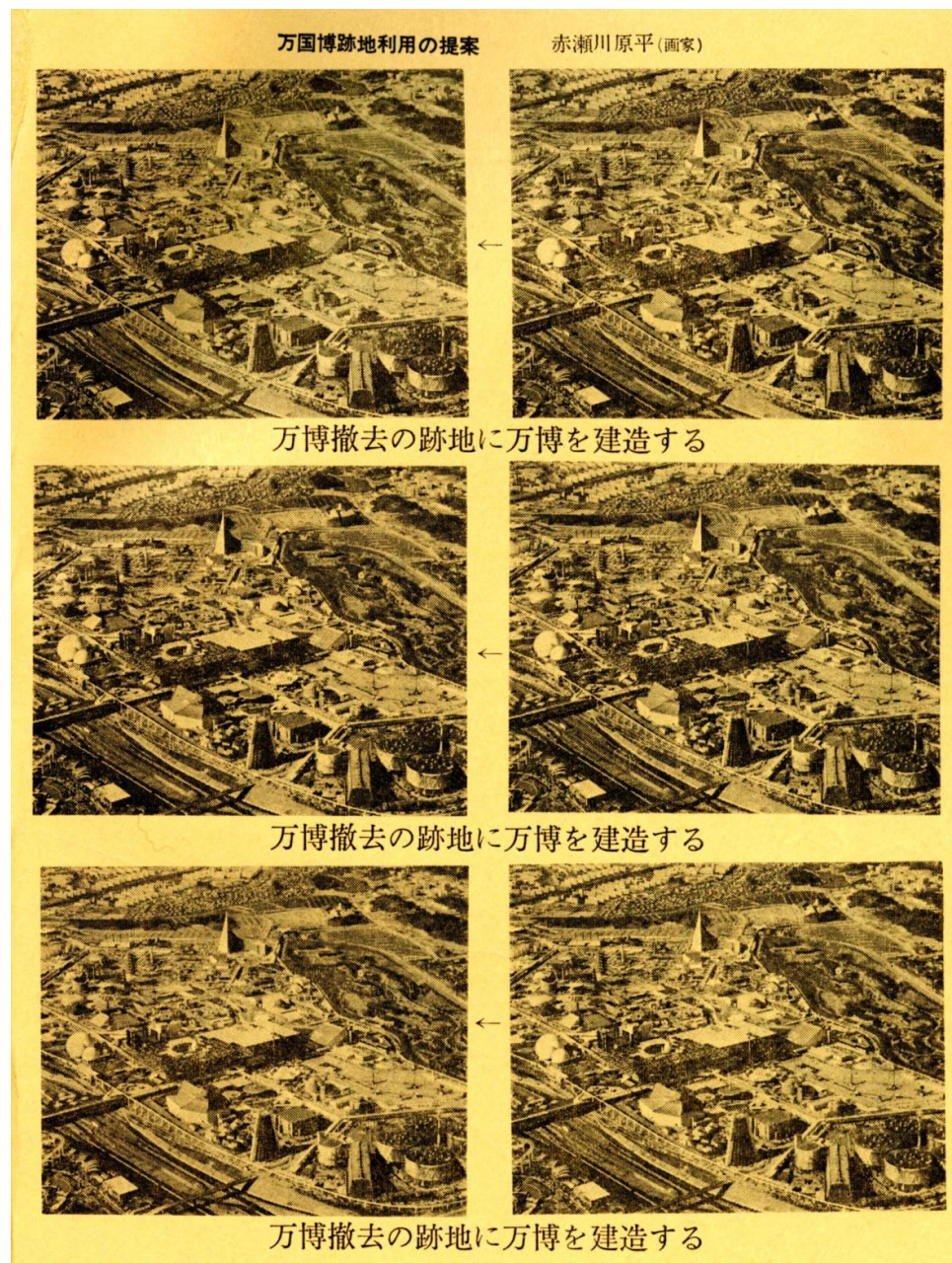




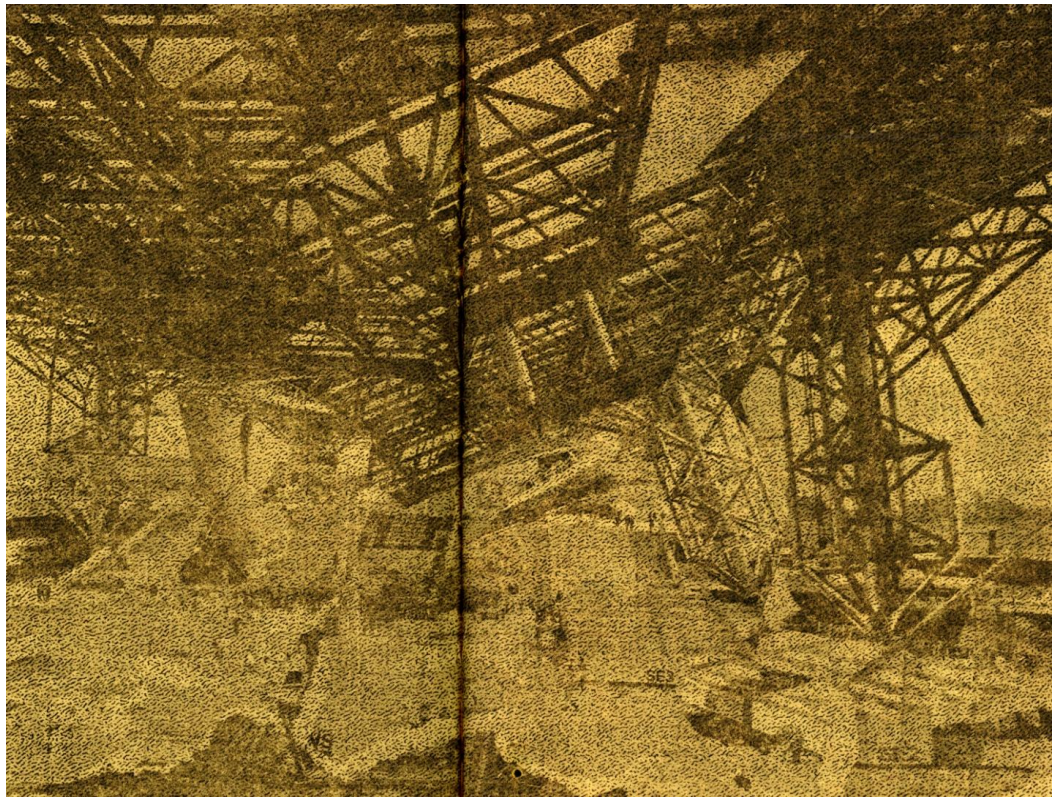
Figure. 5.10.



Akasegawa Genpei  
“Bankokuhaku atochi riyō no teian”  
from *Bijutsu techō*, July 1970 special issue



Figure. 5.11.



Senda Mitsuru

“A proposal for the usage of the former Expo site: construction of a true future play  
city = *teru ludens*” from *Bijutsu techo*, July 1970 special issue

Figure. 5.12.



Senda Mitsuru

“A proposal for the usage of the former Expo site: construction of a true future play city = *teru ludens*” from *Bijutsu techo*, July 1970 special issue

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